SHAKESPEARE

MACBETH

PURCELL AND SOMERS

MACBETH

WITH INTRODUCTION,
NOTES, AND QUESTIONS
FOR REVIEW

Adapted from Marshall and Wood's
"Oxford and Cambridge Edition"

BY

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PREFACE

This series of Shakespeare's plays, which includes *The Merchant of Venice, Julius Cæsar, Macbeth,* and *Hamlet,* is based mainly on the Oxford and Cambridge editions of Spilsbury, and Marshall and Wood. The present Editors have found it expedient to eliminate certain passages in the text, as well as to make some changes of matter and form in the editorial work, deemed necessary for American schools. The Introduction contains a Biographical Sketch of Shakespeare, a short account of the History of the Drama, brief references to the Sources of the Play, to the Characters, to Versification, to the Grammar of Shakespeare, etc. The annotated words are printed in italic type and the notes and word equivalents are given in the margin in juxtaposition with the text for the convenience of the student. The Glossary and many of the Notes have been rewritten, condensed, or amplified, as the case required, and the Classical and Biblical Allusions have been included in the Notes and Glossary. An abstract of the play has been supplied in *Hamlet* and in *The Merchant of Venice.* Some unimportant and apocryphal matter has been omitted. The section on Shakespearean Grammar will be found convenient for those who may have difficulty in classifying many Shakespearean expressions, and the Questions for Review will be of advantage to both teacher and pupil, by saving time for the one, and by assigning specific work to the other.

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INTRODUCTION

I. NARRATIVE OF SHAKESPEARE'S LIFE

William Shakespeare, the greatest of English dramatic poets, was born at Stratford-on-Avon, Warwickshire, England, on April 23, 1564. His father, John Shakespeare, was of the yeoman class. He had been a successful Warwickshire farmer, but he adopted the trade of glover on his removal to Stratford in 1553. There he soon became an important factor in municipal affairs, and by ability and industry he rapidly rose from one position of trust to another, until finally, in 1568, he became high bailiff or mayor of the town. Shakespeare's mother, Mary Arden, was of an old Warwickshire family, and though she inherited "lands and houses" she had no education.

John and Mary Shakespeare had eight children—four sons and four daughters. William, the third child, was the eldest son. Of his infancy and boyhood we know practically nothing. It is probable, however, that at the age of seven he entered the grammar school of Stratford, where he learned the rudiments of Latin, English grammar, writing, arithmetic, and probably a little Greek. His years at school were not many, for the declining fortunes of his father compelled the boy to seek employment when he was but thirteen years of age. After this we hear little or nothing about him until the time of his marriage, which probably took place in December, 1582. His wife, Ann Hathaway, of whom the boy-poet admiringly wrote

> Ann Hathaway, she hath a way
> To charm all hearts, Ann Hathaway,

does not seem to have long exerted that charm over her young husband. At the time of their union he was little more than

eighteen, while she had attained the more mature age of twenty-six. This marriage, like most marriages of its kind, did not prove a happy one.

If a small amount of reliable tradition can be winnowed from the chaff of fiction with which the memory of Shakespeare's boyhood days at Stratford is surrounded, we may give credence to the tales regarding his youthful follies and escapades. Of the latter but one may be mentioned as having a direct bearing upon his whole career. We are told that he took part in poaching expeditions—a prohibited practice of the time—during one of which he was caught stealing deer from the estate of the eccentric Sir Thomas Lucy of Charlecote. The punishment for this offense in those days was a fine and imprisonment. Sir Thomas, being Justice of the Peace for that district, acted as "judge, jury, and executioner" in the case of the young Shakespeare, who bitterly resented the punishment meted out to him. In revenge, it is said, he wrote the scurrilous lampoon beginning

> A parliament member, a justice of peace,
> At home a poor scarecrow, etc.

and posted it on the gate to Charlecote Manor.

This naturally aroused Sir Thomas to further reprisals, and Shakespeare, to escape his vengeance, fled to London in 1585. Verification of the poaching tradition may be found in *2 Henry IV* and in *The Merry Wives of Windsor,* where Lucy is caricatured as "Justice Shallow." The three luces or pikes, in the Lucy coat-of-arms, apparently suggested the "dozen white luces" in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, and the many allusions to poaching found in the context are none the less significant.

Before the poet's departure for London, three children were born to him—Susanna, the eldest, in May, 1583, and Hamnet and Judith, twins, in February, 1585. On his flight, the immediate support of these children is supposed to have devolved upon his

mother-in-law, Mrs. Hathaway, of Shottery, then a widow in affluent circumstances.

Tradition says that Shakespeare's first employment in London was holding horses at theater doors, and doing odd jobs for theater-goers. Be this as it may, we soon find him employed as prompter's attendant, whose duty it was to notify the actors when it was their turn to appear upon the stage, etc., and later we find him filling minor parts in the plays. Gradually he worked his way into more important positions. During these first few years, he must have devoted considerable time to reading, as a preparation for the wonderful works he was afterwards to produce. He recast and revised many old plays, began the production of original dramas, and acted some of the leading rôles in his own plays. In company with William Kempe and Richard Burbage he made a successful appearance before Queen Elizabeth at Greenwich Palace in 1594. He acted before her again at Whitehall in 1596, at Richmond and Whitehall in 1600, four times at Whitehall in 1601-02, and at Richmond Palace in 1603, a month before her death. In 1603 he fell under the favorable notice of King James I., who granted him and his company a license to play in London and the surrounding provinces. Later he appeared at court on several occasions, and in 1604 he marched in the royal train when James made his formal passage from the tower to Westminster. On this occasion he and each of his companions received four and one-half yards of scarlet silk, the usual dress allowance of court actors in those days. It is quite evident that as an actor Shakespeare was much more successful, financially, than as a playwright.

Whatever may have been Shakespeare's youthful follies and extravagances, in later life he became not only a great poet, but he also developed the instincts of a shrewd business man. Through his acting and the sale of his plays he accumulated a respectable fortune, with part of which he purchased some

valuable property in London and elsewhere. After an absence of eleven years he returned to Stratford in 1596, to bury his only son, Hamnet.*

At Stratford Shakespeare invested considerable money in houses and lands, and obtained from the government the distinction of a coat-of-arms, but he did not take up his residence there until 1616. In this year he abandoned dramatic composition and began to enjoy, in his beautiful home at Stratford, a well deserved and much needed rest. At the beginning of this year, however, his health began to fail rapidly, and by April his end was near. The actual cause of his death is unknown, but it is generally admitted that overwork, and a not too submissive obedience to the laws of health, hastened an all too early dissolution. He died on the fifty-second anniversary of his birth, April 23, 1616, and was buried inside the chancel of Stratford church. On his tomb was inscribed the following epitaph:

Good frend for Jesus' sake forbeare
To digg the dust encloased heare,
Blese be ye man yt spares thes stones,
And curst be he yt moves my bones.

II. SHAKESPEARE'S RELIGION

The question of Shakespeare's religion has been long, and sometimes furiously, debated. Many eminent writers incline to the belief that he was a Roman Catholic, while many others, equally eminent, maintain that he was a Protestant. At the risk of being considered partisan the editors have decided to insert the following rather lengthy extract from the pen of the distinguished *litterateur* and scientist, James J. Walsh, M.D., L.H.D.

* The direct line of Shakespeare's family became extinct a little over fifty years after the poet's death. Judith married Thomas Quiney, of Stratford. The offspring of this marriage—three boys—died before reaching the age of manhood. Susanna married Dr. Hall, and of their union was born Elizabeth, the only granddaughter of the poet. Elizabeth married Thomas Nash, who died leaving no children. She then married John Barnard, who was afterwards knighted by Charles II. Lady Barnard died childless in 1669, and thus the immediate family of Shakespeare became extinct.

This extract they hope will be instructive to many Catholics, and interesting, at least, to some who are not Catholics:

There is no doubt that Shakespeare's mother lived and died a Catholic. Her name was Mary Arden, and many of the Ardens continued to be staunch Catholics even during the dangers of Elizabeth's reign. Indeed, one of the prominent members of the family suffered death for the faith. Shakespeare's mother, moreover, made a will in which there is a mention of the Blessed Virgin, a custom that had gone out of vogue in England at this time except among Catholics. Shakespeare's father, too, is on the list of Stratford recusants who were summoned by the court for not attending the Anglican service on Sundays. Shakespeare's immediate surroundings, likewise, were distinctly Catholic, for the spirit of the old religion had not died as yet in England. Indeed, it was very much alive in the central portion of the country.

It is sometimes said, however, that there can be no question of Shakespeare's being a Catholic, for he was married, baptized, and buried in the Anglican Church. But these facts, it must be remembered, have in themselves no such significance as they would possess at the present time. There was no way of having the birth of a child properly registered then in England except by having it baptized in the church by law established. Obsequies also had to be observed according to the Anglican rite, for the only cemetery was close to the parish church. As for Shakespeare's marriage, in recent years the interesting suggestion has been made that the real reason for the circumstances attending the ceremony, which are supposed to carry a hint of scandal with them, is because he was originally married by a Catholic priest. As it was then very perilous for a priest to show himself in public or to perform any official church service, the marriage was, of course, performed secretly. Anne Hathaway's family, moreover, was Catholic by tradition, and about the time of the marriage it is known that a priest, not entirely without the knowledge of the local authorities, used to say Mass privately, in the loft of one of the houses at Shottery.

But if Shakespeare was a Catholic should not his plays show it? Unquestionably. And I maintain they do. Commentators have pointed out, for instance, that Shakespeare in *Romeo and Juliet* follows Arthur Brooke's *Tragical History of Romeo and*

Juliet very closely. He has, however, changed the whole of the play's attitude toward the Catholic Church. Confession instead of being a source of sin actually protects the young people from their own passion in the most difficult circumstances, and almost succeeds in rescuing them from an unfortunate complication. Instead of being "superstitious," Friar Lawrence is pictured as a dear old man interested in his plants and what they can do for mankind, but interested still more in human souls, trying to care for them and quite willing to do everything that he can, even risking the displeasure of two noble houses rather than have the young people commit sin. Friar Lawrence is represented in general as one to whom Romeo and Juliet would naturally turn in their difficulty.

But *King John,* it is maintained, represents an altogether different attitude toward the Church. In that play they assert there are passages which make it very clear that Shakespeare shares the general feeling of the men of England in his time. King John protests, for example:

> That no Italian priest
> Shall tithe or toll in our dominions.
> But as we, under heaven, are supreme head,
> So under Him that great supremacy,
> Where we do reign, we will alone uphold,
> Without the assistance of a mortal hand:
> So tell the Pope, all reverence set apart
> To him and his usurp'd authority.

In this play, too, there are some bitter comments on monks which would seem to prove that Shakespeare shared the opinions of many of his contemporaries regarding monasticism. But let us see: *The Troublesome Reign of King John,* from which Shakespeare made his play, was probably written in the year of the Spanish Armada when English national feeling ran very high and there was bitter antagonism against Catholicism as the religion of England's greatest enemies. The dramatist—we are not quite sure who it was—shrewdly took advantage of this political situation in order to gain favor for his play. He tickled the ears of the groundlings and attracted popular attention by stimulating the prejudice of his audience. Shakespeare modified all this to a very marked extent when he rewrote the play seven years later, though it can be seen that he used many of the words of the original version and was evidently following it very

closely. But for some good reason he was manifestly minimizing all the anti-Catholic bias in it though letting stand whatever sentiments were suitable for such characters as King John and his *entourage*. In the matter of monks and nuns and their treatment in the original version of *King John,* Shakespeare has been even more drastic in the changes that he made.

But the best evidence of Shakespeare's attitude toward the Anglican Church is to be found in *King Henry VIII.,* one of the poet's greatest plays and the last he wrote. Some of the Wolsey speeches in it are the finest examples of English that were ever penned. It is conceded by all the critics to be the ripest fruit of his mature years. Therefore, if a play can be considered the expression of Shakespeare's settled opinion, that play is *Henry VIII.* Now it so happens that the subject of *Henry VIII.* is exactly the story of how the change of religion came about in England. But it is sometimes urged that the fifth act, with its culmination in the birth of Elizabeth, and the high prospects for England and the rejoicings which this occasions, indicates that the writer considered that the marriage of King Henry to Anne Boleyn and the birth of a daughter by that union marked a great epoch in English history and, above all, that the steps that led to this happy termination, though dramatically blameworthy, must be condoned owing to their happy consequences. It is well known, however, that the fifth act by every test known to Shakespearean commentators was not written by Shakespeare at all, but by Fletcher.

Our knowledge of Shakespeare's relations with people in London would indicate that a great many of his friends and intimates were Catholics. It is possible that the Burbages, the actors with whom he was so closely joined during most of his dramatic career, belonged to the Warwickshire Catholic family of that name. One of Shakespeare's dearest friends, the Earl of Southampton, who was his patron in early years, and his supporter when he bought the Blackfriars theater, was closely allied to a Catholic family and, as Simpson has pointed out, was cradled in Catholic surroundings.

The conversion of Ben Jonson about the middle of the last decade of the sixteenth century showed how easily men might be Catholics in London at this time. Ben Jonson was in the Marshalsea prison on a charge of murder in 1594 and found

himself surrounded by priests who were charged with treason because of their refusal to take the oath of supremacy. By associating with them Jonson became a Catholic and when released from prison married a Catholic wife. His child was baptized Mary, and Shakespeare was chosen as her sponsor. This choice of a godfather seems to indicate that Shakespeare was a Catholic at this time for, in his ardor as a new convert, Ben Jonson would scarcely have selected an Anglican for that office.

One more proof of Shakespeare's Catholicism in conclusion: About the close of the seventeenth century Archdeacon Davies, who was a local historian and antiquarian in the neighboring county of Staffordshire, but who was well acquainted with Stratford and its history, and who could easily have had very definite sources of information denied to us, declared that Shakespeare "dyed a papist." It would have been perfectly possible, it must be remembered, for Archdeacon Davies to have spoken with people who knew Shakespeare during the years that the poet spent in Stratford at the end of his life. After this review of the evidence I can not but conclude that Shakespeare not only "dyed a papist," but also lived as one.

Leaving those, to whom these lines may be of interest, to make their own deductions, the editors accept the conclusions of the distinguished Jesuit, Herbert Thurston, who, in discussing this point in the *Catholic Encyclopedia,* maintains that there is no real ground for the belief that Shakespeare either lived or died a Catholic. Thurston concludes his able study of this question by stating, "The point must remain forever uncertain."

III. SHAKESPEARE'S LEARNING

Of Shakespeare's learning it may be said that though classical quotations and allusions are numerous throughout his works, Ben Jonson credits him with "small Latin and less Greek." "His quotations from Latin literature are such as a schoolboy might make from Virgil, Ovid, and the other authors he had studied; and his allusions to classical history and mythology are mostly from the same sources, or from the familiar stock in English books of the period." (Rolfe.) In comparing Shake-

speare with the dramatists of his time, Jasper Mayne, writing in 1637, mentions him as one of those who did his work "without Latin helps"; and Mayne's contemporary, Ramsey, in complimenting Ben Jonson on his knowledge of the classical languages, says that he (Jonson)

could command
That which your Shakespeare could scarce understand.

Yet we are told that Shakespeare's work is "Art without art, unparalleled as yet," and though he borrowed nothing from Latin or Greek, his Julius Cæsar ravished the audience,

When some new day they would not brook a line
Of tedious (though well labour'd) Catiline,

and Jonson's "Sejanus too was irksome." In Fuller's *Worthies* we find the following reference to Shakespeare: "He was an eminent instance of the truth of that rule, Poeta non fit, sed nascitur—one is not made but born a poet. Indeed his learning was very little . . . nature itself was all the art which was used on him." And he speaks of the wit combats between him and Ben Johnson, "which two I behold like a Spanish great galleon and an English man-of-war. Master Jonson (like the former) was built far higher in learning; solid but slow in his performances: Shakespeare, like the English man-of-war, lesser in bulk and lighter in sailing, could turn with all tides, tack about, and take advantage of all winds, by the quickness of his wit and invention." Dryden in his *Essay on Dramatic Poesy* (1668), says: "Those who accuse him to have wanted learning, give him the greater commendation; he needed not the spectacles of books to read nature; he looked inwards and found her there:" and in the same author's prologue to *Julius Cæsar* we find,

So in this Cæsar which today we see,
Tully ne'er spoke as he makes Antony.
Those then that tax his learning are to blame;
He knew the thing, but did not know the name.
Great Jonson did that ignorance adore,
And tho' he envied much, admired him more.

The material for his historical plays he obtained from Holinshed and Plutarch, and in the use of these rather unreliable authorities he makes many unscholarly mistakes.

During his mature years and in the time of his prosperity, he brought out his best works. Some writers credit him with the authorship of forty-three plays of a dramatic character. Seven of these are considered spurious. Thirty-three known to be his are divided as follows:

The Taming of the Shrew The Merchant of Venice All's Well that Ends Well Much Ado About Nothing Measure for Measure	Italian Origin	Comedies
The Comedy of Errors Twelfth Night	Classical (from Plautus)	Comedies
Midsummer-Night's Dream As You Like It	Mediæval Sources	Comedies
Cymbeline	Legendary	Comedies
Two Gentlemen of Verona	Spanish Origin	Comedies
The Merry Wives of Windsor	English Origin	Comedies
Love's Labor's Lost	French Origin	Comedies
The Winter's Tale The Tempest	Origin Unknown	Comedies
Timon of Athens Pericles Julius Cæsar Antony and Cleopatra Coriolanus	Classical Origin (Plutarch's Lives, by North)	Tragedies
Hamlet Troilus and Cressida	Mediæval Origin	Tragedies
Romeo and Juliet Othello	Italian Origin	Tragedies
King Lear Macbeth	Origin—Legendary History of Britain	Tragedies
King John King Richard the Second 1 and 2 King Henry the Fourth King Henry the Fifth 1, 2, 3 King Henry the Sixth Richard the Third Henry the Eighth	Origin—Holinshed & Hall	Chronicle Plays

Besides these he wrote one hundred and fifty-four Sonnets and some Narrative Poems.

IV. THE DRAMA

A lengthy discussion of the drama cannot be conveniently introduced into a text of this kind; therefore, the chief heads only will be touched upon. Drama is a Greek term signifying action, and in its application it comprehends all forms of literature proper for presentation on the stage. In the drama, actors usually tell a story by means of word and action. This story may be tragic or comic;—tragic when the serious phases of life are discussed, comic when life's follies and foibles are depicted. Other phases of the drama which do not, strictly speaking, come under the heading tragedy or comedy, are the Greek Satyrs, the Morality Plays of the Middle Ages, the Pastoral Plays of the Renaissance, and the Melodramas still in vogue.

Although the drama was well established in the remote ages in India and China, the earliest examples of pure dramatic art are to be found in Greece. From the sacred songs and choruses in honor of the god Dionysus, the Greeks in time evolved a form of drama, the chief features of which, even in its highest stages of development, were lyric or choral. To Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, and Aristophanes, in the fifth century, and to Menander at a later period, the Greek drama owes its greatness and its influence in ancient and in modern dramatic literature.

The Roman drama, as it has come down to us in the works of Terence, Plautus, and Seneca, is but a slightly modified form of Menander, and shows some traces of the influence of Aeschylus and other dramatists of his time. This modification, in the comedies of Plautus at least, was not for the betterment of the drama; on the contrary, it was a concession to the depraved taste of his Roman audience. Unfortunately, Plautus' travesties of the old Greek masters later served as models for the dramatic writers of the Renaissance, and his influence is felt even to the

present day. Modern tragedy, generally speaking, is a direct offspring of the works of Seneca. Toward the close of the Roman Empire, the theaters became the scenes of the most degraded exhibitions of indecency and debauchery. Christianity attacked these indecencies and drove the mimes from their haunts of infamy into the streets and byways of Rome and its environs. These mimes practiced their mimicry in the villages and cross-roads, and became the models for the strolling players of the middle ages.

Christianity, however, recognized the necessity of the drama as a humanizing influence, and though years elapsed before its restoration as drama proper, the leaders of the new religion set about the substitution of wholesome Christian plays for the Roman indecencies to which they had recently given the death blow. The Scriptures and the liturgy of the church were rich stores from which were drawn the materials for the *Mystery,* the *Morality,* and the *Miracle Plays.* After a time these exhibitions passed from the control of churchmen into the hands of the Guilds. Under the management of the Guilds these plays soon lost their religious aspect, and before the end of the fifteenth century they had been completely divorced from church influence, and were ready to be destroyed or absorbed by the spirit of the New Learning. This destruction or absorption, however, was not accomplished without a struggle. The leaders of the Renaissance advocated the complete dominance of classic influence in the reconstruction of the drama, while the Mediævalists strenuously advocated the perpetuation of the *Mystery, Morality,* and *Miracle Plays.* Of this travail, however, was born the modern drama.

Italy, France, Germany, England, and Scandinavia contributed largely to the formation of the modern drama, but practically all the dramatic writers of these countries have been influenced by the Greek and Roman masters. These masters have been slavishly imitated by all but a few of their pupils. This

is especially true in the matter of composition and technique. The observance of the unities, the harmony of rhyme, the smoothness of rhythm, the maintenance of the chorus, the number and character of the dramatis personæ, etc., were classic restrictions, which, to a certain extent, have stultified the higher and broader aspirations of many a dramatic genius. Among those who rebelled against these restrictions, in so far as they affected the English drama, were some of the immediate predecessors of Shakespeare—Marlowe, Kyd, Green, and Lyly. These men opened the way for the sweeping innovations of Shakespeare, and for the half-hearted adoption of these innovations by Ben Jonson, who often apologized to his contemporaries for his temerity in disregarding the unities and other classic formulæ.

Since Shakespeare's time, or what is known as the period of the Elizabethan drama, no English dramatic literature, worthy of comparison with the work of that great master, has appeared. During the reign of James I., Massinger, Middleton, Shirley, and others wrote, but their art was only a weak imitation of their masters, Marlowe and Shakespeare. Addison, Steele, Goldsmith, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Shelley, Tennyson, and others, have sought recognition on the dramatic stage, but with little or no success. So far America has produced nothing of a dramatic nature worthy of recognition, and judging from the dominance of the light, frivolous, vaudeville performances on the English and American stages, the drama as a popular entertainment has been laid to rest, and the day of its resurrection seems far distant.

V. THE REPRESENTATION OF THE DRAMA IN SHAKESPEARE'S TIME

The staging of the drama in Shakespeare's time was a very different matter from what it is today. The primitive theaters, or theatrical inns, were rude wooden structures, usually circular in form, with a covered stage and covered galleries, and an open

pit exposed to the vicissitudes of wind and weather. These crude structures were usually located outside the city walls, and beyond the jurisdiction of the city authorities, for, at that time, all theatrical representations were held in disfavor by the Puritanical leaders in church and state. The gallants of the town occupied the stage with the players, and delighted in chaffing and interrupting the actors with irrelevant puns and clownish mimicry. The middle classes occupied the galleries and often enjoyed the spontaneous sallies of wit and repartee between the gallants and the players more than they enjoyed the play itself. The "tag-rag," or what then might have been regarded as we regard our present-day "gallery gods," occupied the pit, and when not dodging the not infrequent missiles hurled from the stage, or the snow or rain from the open firmament, they could appreciate a good comedy or a real drama as well as could the more favored occupants of the reserved places. The stage had no scenery, that being first introduced by Davenant after the Restoration. There were no rise and fall of a curtain to mark the opening and close of a scene. The entrance to the stage was strewn with rushes instead of being carpeted; the walls were hung with arras; a large board with names painted on it indicated where the scenes of the play being produced were laid. For tragedies the walls were hung with black tapestry; Shakespeare speaks of "Black stage for tragedies and murders fell" ("Lucrece"); and History, addressing Comedy, says:

> Look, Comedy, I mark'd it not till now,
> The stage is hung with black, and I perceive
> The auditors prepar'd for tragedie.
>
> *A Warning for Fair Women.*

Before the Restoration women's parts were acted by boys, and even among the audience no woman might appear unless masked. The union of the serious and the comic in the same play was common, and clowns were apt to thrust themselves

upon the stage on all occasions, much to the annoyance of Shakespeare himself. (See *Hamlet,* III., ii., 43.) The costume and many other stage accessories were almost entirely lacking, and the few that were used were usually inappropriate. Thus the gorgeous stage setting of the present day, which adds so much to the successful presentation of the drama, had to be supplied by the keen imagination of the audience; and here we get a fair appreciation of the high degree of intelligence demanded from theater-goers of the Elizabethan period.

VI. THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE DRAMA

"A drama undertakes to tell a story by presenting a few episodes or situations from which the entire course of the action can be inferred. Inasmuch as these scenes are to be presented in rapid succession to an audience, they must be not only clear and easy to follow, but, to be interesting, they must also afford opportunity for striking, significant action on the part of the characters. Further, inasmuch as in a drama the author has no opportunity to tell his audience directly what he thinks of his characters, these latter must reveal their natures and purposes by their attitude toward one another, as manifested in speech or action. It is most important that every action in a drama be explained, prepared for, given a motive, by something which has already taken place, or some trait of character already indicated."—*Robert Morss Lovett.*

VII. DATE OF COMPOSITION OF *MACBETH*

Plausible arguments point to 1606 as the year in which *Macbeth* was completed, but we know nothing more definite than that it was composed between 1604 and 1610. James I ascended the throne in 1603. In the following year he was proclaimed King of Great Britain, France, and Ireland. The lines spoken by Macbeth during the "Show of Eight Kings" (IV. i. 121)

contain an undoubted allusion to King James' coronation and to the union of three kingdoms under one sovereign. This internal allusion, then, marks the year 1604 as being a limit before which the play could not have been written.

External evidence affords a proof that the play was not written later than the year 1610. Dr. Simon Forman,* an astrologer and quack, gives in his diary—the MS. of which is still in existence—an account of the play *Macbeth* as he saw it represented at the Globe Theater on the 20th of April, 1610.

The following arguments, of no great validity individually, but of importance when regarded collectively, have been put forward to prove the play was written in 1606.

1. The Porter's speech in II. iii., "Faith, here's an equivocator, that could swear in both the scales against either scale," is thought to have reference to the trial of the Jesuit Garnett,† which took place in 1606. That this may have been the case is not improbable, for the Jesuits were frequently made the marks for the satire of Elizabethan preachers, and we are told, falsely, however, in the account of Garnett's trial, published in 1606, that they both allowed and taught their followers "to equivocate upon oath."

2. The allusion in the same speech to the "farmer that hanged himself on the expectation of plenty," is commonly supposed to have been suggested by the abundant harvest of the year 1606. That year wheat was lower in Windsor market than it was for thirteen years afterwards, also lower than in the previous year.

3. The same speech contains a reference to "stealing out of a French hose." From Antony Nixon's "Black Year," 1606, we learn that tailors "took more than enough for fashion's sake."

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* Forman, Dr. Simon, born in Quidhampton, England, 1552; died 1611.
† Garnett, Henry, born in England 1555; executed at London 1606. An English Jesuit falsely accused of implication in the Gunpowder plot.

4. In 1605 three students of St. John's College, Cambridge, addressed King James in Latin verses founded on the witches' predictions to Macbeth. "It is not likely," says Fleay,* "that they would choose this subject after Shakespeare had treated it."

5. Two passages from Plutarch's† "Life of Antony" are alluded to in this play, "The insane root that takes the reason prisoner," and "My Genius is rebuked, as it is said Mark Antony's was, by Cæsar." From this circumstance Mr. Fleay* concludes that Shakespeare "was then probably reading for *Antony and Cleopatra*, which was produced before May, 1608."

6. Middleton's‡ *The Puritan*, 1607, contains the passage, "we'll have a ghost in a white sheet sit at the upper end of the table." These words are commonly supposed to refer to Banquo's ghost in *Macbeth*.

Macbeth was not published during its author's lifetime, but first appeared in print in the "First Folio"§ of 1623, where it comes between *Julius Cæsar* and *Hamlet*. The text in this edition is extremely defective, and is generally supposed to have been printed from an imperfect transcript of the author's MS. The play, as we have it, is the shortest of Shakespeare's tragedies, and is probably nothing more than an actor's copy.

Shakespeare's later plays are distinguished from his earlier works by a greater richness of thought, a wider knowledge of human life, and by a nicer choice of more serious subjects for their motives. With respect to the style of any play, it is conceded that the more irregular the meter, the greater the quantity

* Fleay, Rev. Frederick Gard, an English author; began writing in 1857.
† Plutarch, born at Chaeronea, Greece, A. D. 46. Greek historian.
‡ Middleton, Thomas, born London, 1570; died 1627. An English dramatist.
§ The terms "folio and quarto" in reality denote nothing more than the particular size and shape of a book, a folio being a large book, the pages of which are formed by a sheet of paper once doubled; a quarto, a smaller book, of which the pages are formed by a sheet of paper folded in four parts. To the student of Shakespeare, however, the terms have a more special significance. All the plays, fifteen in number, which were printed during the poet's lifetime, were printed in quarto. These plays were entered in the registers of the Stationers' Company, and are usually of ascertained date. The remaining twenty-one plays of the poet remained unprinted until they appeared in folio in 1623.

of prose, the more frequent the double (or feminine) endings, and the fewer the rhyming lines, the later is the period of composition.

A consideration of the metrical evidence (see page 169) leads to the conclusion that *Macbeth* was composed about the year 1606. This play bears, in a marked degree, the characteristics of Shakespeare's third period of composition, which extends from about 1602 to 1608, and includes *Macbeth, Hamlet, Othello, King Lear, Antony and Cleopatra,* and *Coriolanus.* The meter of this period is characterized by great freedom:

1. Trisyllabic feet abound.
2. Short lines are numerous.
3. Double endings are greatly multiplied.
4. The number of Alexandrines gradually increases.
5. Prose and verse are intermingled, frequently in the same scene.
6. The number of rhyming lines gradually falls off, or rhyme is confined to elevated passages and concluding verses.
7. Unnatural conceits are avoided, e. g., profoundness is not lavished on shallow ideas, and the language employed is more generally characteristic of the speaker.

Gervinus,* commenting on Shakespeare's third period of dramatic poetry, in which tragedy greatly predominates, speaks as follows:

"The unnatural dissolving of natural bonds, oppression, falsehood, treachery, and ingratitude towards benefactors, friends, and relatives, towards those to whom the most sacred duties should be dedicated, this is the new tragical conception, which now most powerfully and profoundly occupies the poet in the most various works of this epoch of his life . . . Macbeth's treason towards his benefactor, Duncan, displays this ingratitude."

* Gervinus, Georg Gottfried, born at Darmstadt, Germany, 1805; died at Heidelberg, 1871. A celebrated German historian and critic.

VIII. DISTINCTIVE FEATURES OF THE PLAY

Drake* speaks of *Macbeth* as "the greatest effort of our author's genius; the most sublime and impressive drama which the world has ever beheld," and it has always proved to be one of the most popular of Shakespeare's plays. The reason for this popularity is not hard to find. In the first place, it is the most rapid and the simplest of the poet's dramas, the characterization being most apparent and easily understood. Again it deals with the supernatural, which always arouses interest, and "the supernatural influence determines the course of the action with a precipitation which in itself appears almost supernatural." Finally, to the never-ceasing interest of incident and characterization, there is added the charm of pictorial description and poetic coloring.

"There can hardly be a single point of incident or of character on which the youngest reader will not find himself at one with the oldest, the dullest with the brightest, among the scholars of Shakespeare."—*Swinburne.*†

"The action of this drama occupies a considerable period of time, but in the rapidity of its movement and the intensity of its interest, the matter of duration may not be considered.—The Fates‡ are weaving their dark web on the bosom of time, and the storm and whirlwind of events are impelling the hero to his first desperate act. These same agencies afterward impel him to commit other atrocious crimes, to secure the fruits of the assassination, and they drive him at last to his own destruction, amid the blood and carnage of a hand-to-hand conflict. The whole tragical exhibition resembles the course of a terrifying comet."§

"*Macbeth* stands forth uniquely pre-eminent in the splendor

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* Drake, Nathan, born at York, England, 1766; died, 1836. An English physician and author.

† Swinburne, Algernon Charles, born at London, 1837; died, 1909. An English poet and author.

‡ The Roman Parcae, corresponding to the Greek Moerae.

§ Schlegel, August Wilhelm von, born at Hanover, Germany, 1767; died, 1845. A celebrated German poet and critic.

of poetic and picturesque diction, and in the living representation of persons, times, and places. . . . Locally, we are transported into the Highlands of Scotland, where everything appears tinged with superstition . . . ; where men are credulous in belief, and excitable in fancy; where they speak with strong expression, with highly poetical language, and with unusual imagery."—*Gervinus.**

"All the preparatory incidents are poetical. The moon is down; Banquo and Fleance walk by torchlight; the servants are moving to rest; Macbeth is alone. He sees 'the air-drawn dagger' which leads him to Duncan; he is still under the influence of some power stronger than his will; he is beset with false creations; his imagination is excited; he moves to bloodshed amidst a crowd of poetical images, with which his mind dallies, as it were, in its agony."—*Knight.*†

"There is a line in the play of *Macbeth,* uttered as the evening shadows begin to gather on the day of Banquo's murder, which we may repeat to ourselves as a motto of the entire tragedy, 'Good things of day begin to droop and drowse.' It is the tragedy of the twilight and the setting in of thick darkness upon a human soul. We assist at the spectacle of a terrible sunset in folded clouds of blood."—*Dowden.*‡

IX. *MACBETH* AND *HAMLET*—A CONTRAST

"Of all Shakespeare's plays, *Macbeth* is the most rapid, *Hamlet* the slowest, in movement," says Coleridge.§ The tragedies resemble each other especially in that the supernatural plays an important part in each. Macbeth and Hamlet commit murders, and the two plays present certain points of similarity in the final scene. But the contrast between the plays as well as

* See footnote, p. 24.

† Knight, Charles, born at Windsor, England, 1791; died, 1873. An English publisher and author.

‡ Dowden, Edward, born at Cork, Ireland, 1843; still living, 1915. An eminent Irish critic and poet.

§ Coleridge, Samuel Taylor, born at Ottery St. Mary, England, 1772; died at London, 1834. An English poet, philosopher, and literary critic.

between the characters of the heroes is much greater than the resemblance. In Macbeth, conscience is awakened after the deed; Hamlet has scruples which restrain him too long from the deed. In Macbeth, the murder of Duncan was an act of the basest ingratitude. For Hamlet to have murdered Claudius would, in the circumstances in which he was placed, have been regarded as an act of righteous punishment. In *Hamlet* adverse fate pursues the hero for tardiness of action; in *Macbeth,* fate, through the instrumentality of the witches, drives the hero onward from crime to crime with breathless rapidity. Hamlet is brave and careless of death, vacillating from sensibility, procrastinating through too much thinking. He is "a man of a civilized period standing in the center of an heroic age of rough manners and physical daring." Macbeth is courageous when in action, a coward when he thinks. His bravery is that of the ferocious animal, and his almost savage nature is, in the play, contrasted with the civilization of the age in which he lives. Christianity was well established in England, though it had gained but little hold upon the generality of Scotchmen in Macbeth's time. Macbeth's reason for not committing suicide is "Whiles I see lives, the gashes do better upon them;" Hamlet is restrained by the thought: "O that the Everlasting had not fixed His canon 'gainst self-slaughter."

"In *Hamlet* and *Macbeth* the scene opens with superstition; but in each it is not merely different, but opposite. In the first it is connected with the best and holiest feelings; in the second with the shadowy, turbulent, and unsanctified cravings of the individual will. Nor is the purpose the same; in the one the object is to excite, whilst in the other it is to mark a mind already excited. . . . "

"The style and rhythm of the Captain's [Sergeant's] speeches in the second scene should be illustrated by reference to the interlude in *Hamlet,* in which the epic is substituted for the tragic, in order to make the latter be felt as the real life diction. In

Macbeth the poet's object was to raise the mind at once to the high tragic tone, that the audience might be ready for the precipitate consummation of guilt in the early part of the play." —*Coleridge.**

X. SOURCES OF THE PLAY

Ralph Holinshed's† "Chronicle of Scotland," written in 1577, furnished Shakespeare with the striking incidents which form the subject of the play. Holinshed himself had borrowed from Bellenden's‡ Scotch translation of the Latin Chronicle of Hector Boethius.§

In the supernatural portions of the play—which are elaborated from the scanty allusion to witches and wizards in the chronicle—the poet has embodied most of the traditional beliefs of his own time. Doubtless he obtained hints also from James I's "Dæmonologie," published in 1597, and reprinted in 1603, and from Reginald Scot's|| "Discoverie of Witchcraft," 1584.

In his construction of the play, Shakespeare has made use of two separate portions of Holinshed's Chronicle, and has made such changes affecting persons, time, and place, that the tragedy can not be properly regarded as an historical play, even if it were certain that the events narrated by Holinshed himself were historically accurate. The greater part of the play is founded upon the "Historie of Macbeth," while for the details of the murder of King Duncan, Shakespeare borrowed from an earlier page of the Chronicle—from the account of the murder of King Duff by Donwald, Captain of the Castle of Forres.

In the Chronicle of Holinshed, Shakespeare found an excellent subject for a drama of a tragical nature, and we need not be surprised therefore to find that in many of the principal inci-

* See footnote, p. 26.

† Holinshed, Raphael, born at Cheshire, England; died about 1580. An English chronicler.

‡ Bellenden, born at Berwick, Scotland, about 1500; died at Rome 1550. A Scotch poet and prose writer.

§ Boethius, Hector, born about 475 A. D.; died about 542 A. D. A Roman philosopher.

|| Scot, Reginald; died 1599. An English author.

dents the dramatist has closely followed the historian. A few of the more important resemblances are mentioned here.

1. That Macbeth was the support of his cousin, the weak King Duncan, against internal rebels and external enemies.

2. The prophecies of the three witches to Macbeth and Banquo.

3. That Lady Macbeth was "verie ambitious," and incited her husband to the murder, the suspicion of which fell on the sons who fled.

4. That fearful tempests and unnatural portents marked the period of the murder.

5. The growth of suspicion against Macbeth and the deterioration of his character after the first murder.

6. That envy and mistrust caused Macbeth to murder Banquo, and that Fleance escaped.

7. Macbeth's mistrust of Macduff, Macduff's flight, and the murder of his family.

8. The further deceptive prediction of the witches.

9. The whole of the conversation between Macduff and Malcolm.

10. The deliverance of Scotland by Malcolm, with assistance from England.

To the student of the drama it may perhaps be of more importance to observe carefully the chief points wherein Shakespeare departs from, or considerably enlarges upon, his authority, than to study minutely the points of resemblance. Such changes fall naturally under two heads, Changes of Incident, and Character Digressions.

Changes of Incident

1. In Holinshed* the rebellion of Macdonwald, the invasion of Sweno, King of Norway, and a subsequent attack upon Scotland by the forces of Canute, are three separate and distinct

* See footnote, p. 28.

events which took place at different times. Shakespeare has combined the three into one, and has drawn incidents from each to avoid scattering them over a longer period than the time of action necessitated.

2. The death of Macdonwald, who, in Holinshed,* slew himself, is by Shakespeare ascribed to the hand of Macbeth. This change is introduced to reflect luster on the warlike character of the hero.

3. In Holinshed the murder of the King (Duff) is perpetrated by four hired servants. In Shakespeare, Macbeth, with his own hand, murders King Duncan. Shakespeare makes this modification in order to magnify the horror of the scene and to enhance the character-interest of the play.

4. In Holinshed, Banquo is murdered after his return from Macbeth's banquet; in Shakespeare he is murdered on his way thither. This change provides an opportunity for displaying both Macbeth and his wife in a strking situation.

5. According to the historical account, Macbeth reigned seventeen years. Shakespeare has considerably curtailed the time of action because the development of the tragedy within proper limits requires rapid movements and swift changes.

Character Digressions

1. Macbeth in history possessed many admirable characteristics, which Shakespeare has omitted to mention. Holinshed speaks of him as "the sure defense and buckler of innocent people," and states that for some time he "used great liberaltie towards the nobles of the realme," and "set his whole intention to mainteine justice." The purpose of this change is to simplify and render more consistent the character of Macbeth, and to accentuate the witches' influence, which in the play is represented as being ever at work.

2. Shakespeare has taken his idea of Lady Macbeth from

* See footnote, p. 28.

an allusion in Holinshed to the wife of Donald, who incited her husband to murder King Duff. But in his characterization he has enlarged and improved upon the hints which he found in the history. He has made the haughty and ambitious Lady Macbeth proud of her husband, whom she loves, and for whose sake she stifles her conscience and changes her nature. Moreover, the Chronicle contains no suggestion of the "single ray which lightens the black depravity of a mind otherwise dead to every softer feeling of humanity." This change is necessary, because if Shakespeare had represented his heroine as coarse or inhumanly cruel, she would have forfeited all claim to human sympathy.

3. The Chronicle represents Banquo as scarcely less guilty than is the actual murderer of Duncan. We there read that Macbeth communicated his intent to "his trustie friends, amongst whom Banquo was the chiefest." This deviation undoubtedly heightens, by contrast and variety, the interest of the characterization. Shakespeare again deviates in the character of Banquo by making him, out of compliment to James I, a legendary ancestor of the king.

History does not record the fate of the usurper's queen. In the Chronicle, Macbeth fled before Macduff. Neither the first scene of the play; the dagger scene; the scene of the banquet; nor the sleep-walking scene, has any counterpart in Holinshed.

"The story of the Scottish Thane, as it stood written in the Chronicle, is the subject not the action of *Macbeth*. To convert a subject—whatever its kind or source—into the action or fable of a play is the primary task, which in its progressive development becomes the entire task of the dramatist."—*Ward.**

XI. ON WITCHES AND WITCHCRAFT

The modern playgoer is apt to scorn the notion of witches, and the practice of witchcraft. But modern ideas upon the

* Ward, Adolphus William, born at Hampstead, England, 1837. An English educator and writer.

subject are very different from those which were prevalent at the period in which *Macbeth* was written. It is difficult, in this age of enlightenment, to dispossess oneself of the negative convictions which have gradually grown in intensity since the legal abolition, in 1736, of witchcraft as a crime, and to regard it as Shakespeare's contemporaries regarded it. However, if we bear in mind a few of the following facts we may be able to understand the views of Elizabethan audiences, who believed in, but abhorred witchcraft. The eminent lawyers Coke, Bacon, and Hall, admitted the possibility of witchcraft.

A witch has been defined by a historian of witchcraft as one "who can do, or seems to do, strange things, beyond the power of art and ordinary nature, by virtue of a confederacy with Satanic powers."

Bishop Jewel,* preaching before Queen Elizabeth, in 1558, remarked: "It may please your Grace to understand that Witches and Sorcerers within these last few years are marvelously increased within your Grace's realm."

The numerous trials for witchcraft which took place in the sixteenth and in the earlier part of the seventeenth centuries, afford abundant evidence not only that witches were commonly supposed to exist, but also that those accused of being witches believed themselves to be such.

In 1576, Bessie Dunlop was accused of having held intercourse with a devil, who appeared to her in the shape of a neighbor recently deceased. She was condemned to death upon her own confession.

In 1590, John Fian, a young schoolmaster, styled "Register to the Devil," was accused of having caused a leak in the ship which conveyed James I (I of England and VI of Scotland) and his bride, Anne of Denmark, home to Scotland. During the trial, Fian showed that by witchcraft he could open locks.

* Jewel, John, born in England 1522; died in 1571. An English bishop and author.

Agnes Sampsoune confessed to King James that to compass his death she took a black toad, hung it by the hind legs for three days, and collected the vemon that fell from it.

James I., himself a believer in witchcraft and all kinds of sorcery, published his "Dæmonologie," at Edinburgh, in 1597. The book was reprinted in London, in 1603, with a preface, informing the reader of "the fearfull abounding at this time in this Countrey, of these detestable slaves of the Devil, the Witches, or enchanters."

In this monarch's first Parliament, in 1604, a statute passed both Houses which enacted that "if any person shall practice or exercise any invocation or conjuration of any evil or wicked spirit, or shall consult with, entertain, feed, or reward any evil and wicked spirit, or take up any dead man, woman, or child out of his, her, or their grave . . . or the skin, bone, or any other part of any dead person to be employed or used in any manner of witchcraft . . . or shall . . . practice . . . any witchcraft . . . whereby any person shall be killed, wasted, pined, or lamed in his or her body or any part thereof, such offender shall suffer the pains of death as felons, without benefit of clergy or sanctuary."*

In the case of the Lancashire witches, in 1634, seventeen persons were condemned on the evidence of one boy.

In the case of the Suffolk witches, in 1665, Sir Matthew Hale† was the judge, and Sir Thomas Browne‡ was the medical expert witness.

Many other evidences might be quoted, but those we have given will suffice to prove the implicit and almost universal belief in witches in Shakespeare's time, and for many years

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* Quoted from Spalding's "Elizabethan Demonology."—Spalding, William, born at Aberdeen, Scotland, 1809; died, 1859. A Scottish critic, philosopher, and miscellaneous writer.

†Hale, Sir Matthew, born in England 1609; died in 1676. A celebrated English jurist.

‡ Browne, Sir Thomas, born at London 1605; died in 1682. An English physician and author.

later. The last trial in England was that of Jane Wenham, in 1712, convicted at Hertford, but not executed.

It is probable that the belief in witches had a religious origin. Before the conversion of King Æthelberht to Christianity, in the sixth century, the inhabitants of the British Isles worshipped a number of native deities of varying importance and power. On the introduction of Christianity these pagan deities may be supposed to have been, to some extent, incorporated into the national religion, but to have been degraded to the rank of evil spirits or demons. The religion of Greece had passed through the same process before the introduction of Christianity into that country, and there Hecate retained to the last her position of active patroness and encourager of witchcraft. Hence the practice became almost indissolubly connected with her name. These evil spirits or demons were supposed to be specially concerned with the human race, and the person particularly susceptible to their influence was "the pitiable object, whether man or woman, whom age, infirmity, or poverty, had humbled to the lowest depth of misery."

Witches were commonly supposed to be capable of performing the wonderful feats which Shakespeare has attributed to the Three Weird Sisters. It was believed that they could foretell future events, or "look into the seeds of time and say which grain will grow and which will not"; they could create tempests, hail, thunder, and lightning; they were able to sink ships, dry up springs, arrest the course of the sun, stay both day and night, and change the one into the other; they could compass the death of those upon whom they had designs, and by means of special preparations and ointments, could themselves vanish out of sight. To make their charms they opened graves and from the dead bodies took fingers, toes, and knees—in the cases of John Fian and the Witches of the play, IV, i, the members of unbaptized infants were preferred. They could open locks, could ride upon the blast, and in riddles or sieves, in egg-shells

and cockle-shells sail through tempestuous seas. They summoned souls from the grave, and possessed the power of transforming themselves into wolves, rats, etc.

Witches were held to perform their actions under the direction of Satan. He was supposed to preside at the Witches' Sabbath, and to him were assigned at different times the names Hecate, Diana, and Sybilla. As the direct power of the Evil One over mankind has always been limited, so in the case of the witches, "they have no authority with fatalistic power to do violence to the human will." They were unable to destroy the lives of the persons they persecuted unless they could persuade them to renounce God. It is to be presumed, therefore, that the sailor's wife in I. iii. was a devout woman, for the Witch proposed to inflict no personal injury upon her, and could do no more than persecute her husband:

> Though his bark cannot be lost,
> Yet it shall be tempest-tost.

"The sort of such as are said to be witches," writes Scot,* in 1584, "are women which be commonly old, lame, bleareied, pale, fowle, and full of wrinkles. . . . They are leane and deformed, showing melancholie in their faces, to the horror of all that see them." A beard was also, in Elizabethan times, a recognized characteristic of the witch. Spenser† has given a striking picture of the habitation of a witch in the lines—

> There in a gloomy hollow glen she found
> A little cottage built of stickes and reedes
> In homely wise, and wald with sods around;
> In which a Witch did dwell, in loathly weedes
> And wilful want, all carelesse of her needes.

We have seen how fully Shakespeare availed himself of the popular traditions relating to witchcraft. It would, how-

* See footnote, p. 28.

† Spenser, Edmund, born at London, 1552; died in 1599. A celebrated English poet.

ever, be an error to think that Shakespeare's Witches are nothing more than the dramatic impersonations of the witch of popular tradition. The poet has taken all his local color from home-bred superstition, but he has given to his creations a poetical grandeur and an awe which elevates them far above the conceptions of witches commonly accepted in his time. Dowden * speaks of them as powers auxiliary to vice existing outside ourselves, nameless and sexless, and likens them to "the terrible old women† of Michael Angelo,‡ who control the destinies of man."

"Shakespeare fearlessly showed us his weird sisters, 'the goddesses of destinie' brewing infernal charms in their wicked cauldron. . . . Yet these weird sisters remain terrible and sublime. They tingle in every fiber with evil energy, as the tempest does with the electric current; their malignity is inexhaustible; they are wells of sin springing up into everlasting death; they have their raptures and ecstasies in crime; they snatch with delight at the relics of impiety and foul disease; they are the awful inspirers of murder, insanity, suicide."—*Dowden* Shakespeare, His Mind and Art.*

XII. WHAT IS TRAGEDY?

Tragedy solves the problems of life as a farce sums up its follies. Coleridge says that in Shakespeare "tragedy was poetry in the deepest earnest; comedy was mirth in the highest zest, exulting in the removal of all bounds." Again, "Tragedy as conceived by Shakespeare," says Dowden,* "is concerned with the ruin or the restoration of the soul, and of the life of men. In other words, its subject is the struggle of good and evil in the world." A play is not a tragedy merely because it tells a tale of

* See footnote, p. 26.

† The Fates: Clotho, the spinner; Lachesis, the disposer of lots; and Atropos, the inevitable. The first spins the thread of life; the second fixes its length; and the third severs it.

‡ Michael Angelo (Michelangelo), born at Caprese 1475; died at Rome, 1564. A famous Italian sculptor, painter, architect, and poet.

death or suffering. Its characteristic motive is "the exhibition of man in unsuccessful conflict with circumstances." It must appeal to our emotions—to our pity or terror—and the actions which arouse these emotions must, at the same time, elevate the mind that contemplates them. In a tragedy the result often springs from a cause quite remote from that to which we attribute the result. *Macbeth* is tragic because of the promise and possibilities which have come to nothing, not because the hero and his wife died miserable deaths. Throughout the first half of the play Macbeth seems likely to attain his ends. Even after he has made the fatal error of murdering Banquo, and of disclosing his crime to the guests at the banquet, when ruin threatens him, there is still, in the wonderfully powerful construction of the second half of the play, the suggestion of a possible recovery. But Macbeth has attempted the impossible, and because the means he employs are wicked and inhuman, the inevitable consequences of his action work themselves out, and the result is tragedy. "The powers of evil in which he has trusted turn against him and betray him. His courage becomes a desperate rage. We are in pain until the horrible necessity is accomplished."

XIII. THE CHARACTERS OF THE PLAY

Duncan

Duncan is such a king as might be expected to offer a mark to rebels, traitors, and ambitious aspirants to sovereignty. He is "a man born out of his proper age into a century of intrigue and violence." He is a virtuous monarch, beloved by the faithful few, but of too refined and peaceful a nature to cope with the turbulent and warlike spirits against whom he has to contend. At the beginning of the play, he damages his own prestige and endangers his own position by committing to Macbeth the safe-guarding of his interests, which he ought himself to have

undertaken. He is spoken of as "the gracious Duncan," "a most sainted king," and one who

> Hath borne his faculties so meek, hath been
> So clear in his great office, that his virtues (I. vii. 17)

"will plead like angels trumpet-tongued against" his murderer. His too great trustfulness is exhibited by the favors he lavishes upon his "peerless kinsman," and by the unsuspicious way in which he visits Macbeth's castle and places himself freely in his hands. It would have been well for him had he known something of the practical political wisdom displayed by the Gardener in *Richard II,* and

> Cut off the heads of too-fast-growing sprays,
> That look too lofty in our commonwealth.

Had he done so, he might have lived to taste the fruits of duty rendered by loyal subjects. Instead of that, the thane of Cawdor, "that most disloyal traitor," a gentleman on whom Duncan "built an absolute trust," rent his kingdom with rebellion, and Macbeth, in whom he placed unbounded confidence, robbed him at once of his kingdom and his life.

In Holinshed* Duncan is weaker and less effective as a king than he is in Shakespeare. The Chronicle says he was "so soft and gentle of nature" that men were constrained to wish that some of Macbeth's more forcible qualities had been infused into him.

"The beginning of Duncan's reigne was verie quiet and peaceable, without anie notable trouble; but after it was perceived how negligent he was in punishing offenders, manie misruled persons tooke occasion thereof to trouble the peace and quiet state of the commonwealth."

We read also that the early success of Macdonwald "did put him in wonderfull feare, by reason of his small skill in warlike affaires."

* See footnote, p. 28.

On the other hand, the Duncan of Holinshed* is neither so liberal, so saintly, nor so unsuspecting as the Duncan of Shakespeare, for he "did what in him lay to defraud him (Macbeth) of all manner of title and claime, which he might, in time to come, pretend unto the crowne."

Macbeth

Upon the characters of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth hang, in great measure, the issues of the play. The uncanny and supernatural influence of the Witches no doubt counts for much, and often seems to shape the course of events, but it is important to remember that if the characters of Macbeth and his wife had not been exactly what they were, the influence exerted by the Witches could never have had the results which it actually had.

Macbeth's personal valor and generalship are the qualities which first impress us. He is the life and soul of the army which Duncan himself should have led to victory. In the first engagement he is victorious through his personal prowess and generalship:

> But all's too weak:
> For brave Macbeth—well he deserves that name—
> Disdaining fortune, with his brandish'd steel,
> Which smoked with bloody execution,
> Like valour's minion carved out his passage
> Till he faced the slave;—I. ii. 14.

Nor is he dismayed when the army of the rebel is reinforced "with terrible numbers" by the King of Norway, "assisted by that most disloyal traitor, the thane of Cawdor." Again the victory falls to Macbeth—"Bellona's bridegroom"—and he becomes forthwith the hero of the hour. With the progress of events, as his conscience becomes hardened, and the powers of evil gradually assume their sway over him, he loses

* See footnote, p. 28.

something of his natural fearlessness, but in the hour of action his courage always reasserts itself. When Lady Macbeth is in fear lest he should waver from his purpose, it is to his manhood and his courage that she makes her appeal:

> When you durst do it, then you were a man;
> And, to be more than what you were, you would
> Be so much more the man.—I. vii. 49.

This physical courage stands out in strong contrast to his moral cowardice.

His fears in Banquo "stick deep" because he recognizes in him virtues which he himself does not possess, because Banquo, choosing to keep his "bosom franchised and allegiance clear," will not become a partner in his crimes. The courage of Macbeth is the unthinking courage of the animal, whose instinct is to fight. When he reflects, he hesitates and fears, until he receives from his wife, or from the sense of security which he derives from communion with the Witches, the necessary impetus to action. After his degradation his courage becomes desperation, and by ruthless acts of cruelty and savagery he strives to keep aflame within his breast the physical courage which was once his claim to our admiration. "Thou shalt not live," he says of Macduff, another character by whose moral superiority his own genius is rebuked,

> That I may tell pale-hearted fear it lies,
> And sleep in spite of thunder.—IV. i. 85.

Foiled in his purpose against Macduff, his savage frenzy becomes the more unrestrained, and he will murder

> His wife, his babes, and all unfortunate souls
> That trace him in his line.—IV. i. 152.

His cruelty knows no bounds. "Sighs and groans and shrieks that rend the air are made, not mark'd," so thoroughly does he act upon the resolve to exterminate Macduff and his posterity.

Yet he is an object of pity rather than of hate. Even his enemies feel for him, if they do not actually excuse him:

> Some say he's mad; others, that lesser hate him,
> Do call it valiant fury (V. ii. 13),

says Caithness, and Menteith suggests how terrible is the penalty he pays for his crimes:

> Who then shall blame
> His pester'd senses to recoil and start,
> When all that is within him does condemn
> Itself for being there?—V. ii. 22.

After his courage, Macbeth's ambition next forces itself upon our attention. Of this we become conscious when, on his first appearance in the play, he "starts, and seems to fear" the fair-sounding prediction of the Witches. His "rapt" behavior, his anxiety and his brooding over the prophecy, all point to his hope of one day being king. It seems clear that the thought of the murder had already passed through his mind. (See I. iii. 51-7, and I. vii. 48-53.) His triumphant success and the flattering prediction of the Third Witch, "All hail, Macbeth! that shalt be king hereafter!" fan the slumbering fires of his ambition into devouring flames. Near the end of the First Act, after a searching self-examination in connection with the murder he proposes to commit, he confesses,

> I have no spur
> To prod the sides of my intent, but only
> Vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself,
> And falls on the other.—I. vii. 25.

The analysis of Macbeth's character, as it was at the beginning of the play, is facilitated by the assistance of his wife. Lady Macbeth knows her husband, and, though she loves and admires him, yet no excess of passion or of imagination dims the clearness of her judgment. She sums up his character and her own fears for him in I. v. 17, and seq.

From this passage the reader will observe that even to his wife Macbeth is but an ordinary man; his ambition is great, and he wishes to stand well with the world, but he is without principle and refrains from wrong-doing only from custom or from the fear of detection. The future of such a man necessarily depends upon his environment and the temptations by which he is assailed.

Macbeth, at first, appears to be a man of good intentions, who lives a virtuous life, and who, in an ordinary sphere of existence, might so continue to the end. But his character is weak. In the first place, he is unable to resist the alluring temptations to which his power and his successes give birth; and secondly, he is unable to resist the over-mastering will of his cold-blooded, ambitious wife. Another source of his weakness is his imagination, which, being controlled neither by religion nor by education, naturally disposes him to lend a ready ear to the voice of temptation.

His superstition is evident from his susceptibility to the influence of the Witches, contrasting strongly in the First Scene with the careless indifference of Banquo; it is seen also in the "air-drawn dagger" that marshals him the way that he is going; in the paroxysm of fear which seizes him immediately after the murder of Duncan when his wife warns him:

> You do unbend your noble strength, to think
> So brainsickly of things (II. ii. 44),

and when he dare not look on what he has done. Above all, the vision of Banquo's Ghost at the feast, unseen by all except himself, shows that he is tremulously alive to superstition. In this excess of imagination and superstition lie at once his strength and his weakness as a criminal. At one moment it hurries him on to crime, by displaying in vivid colors what seems to him the glorious fruits of ambition; at another it hurls him into the depths of despair, by calling up the visions of the past, and by making him see all too clearly the enormity of his crimes.

No sooner does Macbeth attain to the summit of his ambition by the murder of Duncan and Banquo, than his character suffers a complete revolution. He becomes distrustful, treacherous, cruel; he no longer listens to the voice of conscience, no longer hesitates when evil suggestions present themselves, but, following the natural bent of his evil propensities, he marches madly from crime to crime. We lose our sympathy with him until we see that he is suffering a penalty sterner and more terrible than the death he had inflicted upon Duncan and Banquo. "He puts on despondency," says Coleridge,* "the final heart-armor of the wretched, and would fain think everything shadowy and unsubstantial, as indeed all things are to those who cannot regard them as symbols of goodness."

"Macbeth retained enough of goodness to make him a haggard, miserable criminal; never enough to restrain him from a crime. . . . Yet the soul of Macbeth never quite disappears into the blackness of darkness. He is a cloud without water, carried about of winds; a tree whose fruit withers, but not even to the last quite plucked up by the roots. For the dull ferocity of Macbeth is joyless. . . . Macbeth remembers that he once knew there was such a thing as human goodness. He stands a haggard shadow against the handsbreadth of pale sky which yields us sufficient light to see him."—*Dowden.*†

"Thus Macbeth is essentially the practical man, the man of action, of the highest experience, power, and energy in military and political command, accustomed to the closest connection between willing and doing. He is one who, in another age, would have worked out the problem of free trade, or unified Germany, or engineered the Suez Canal. On the other hand, he has concerned himself little with things transcendental; he is poorly disciplined in thought and goodness; prepared for any emergency in which there is anything to be done, yet a mental

* See footnote, p. 26.
†See footnote, p. 26.

crisis or a moral problem afflicts him with the shock of an unfamiliar situation."—*Moulton.**

"Macbeth in meeting them (the Witches) has to struggle against no external power, but only with his own nature; they bring to light the evil side of his character, which was not to be read in his face; he does not stumble upon the plans of his royal ambition, because the allurement approaches him from without; but this temptation is sensibly awakened in him, because those plans have long been slumbering in his soul. Within himself dwell these spirits of evil, which allure him with the delusions of his aspiring mind. They approach him, as he stands on the highest step of his fortune, his favor, and his valor."—*Gervinus.*†

"The preservation of Macbeth's dignity in a degree sufficient to retain our sympathy, in spite of the preponderance of his wife's nature over his, depends on the two facts of his undoubted heroism in his relations with men, and his great tenderness for the woman whose evil will is made powerful over his partly by his affection for her. It is remarkable that hardly one scene passes where they are brought together in which he does not address to her some endearing appellation; and from his first written words to her whom he calls his 'Dearest partner of greatness,' to his pathetic appeal to her physician for some alleviation of her moral plagues, a love of extreme strength and tenderness is constantly manifested in every address to or mention of her that he makes."—*Frances Anne Kemble.*‡

Lady Macbeth

In his consideration of Lady Macbeth's character the reader will do well to divest himself of the opinion frequently entertained, that she is nothing but a cruel monster, lacking the com-

* Moulton, Richard Green, born at Preston, England, 1849; still living, 1915. An English author, critic, and educator.

† See footnote, p. 24.

‡ Kemble, Frances Anne, born at London, 1809; died, 1893. An Anglo-American actress, Shakespearean reader, and author.

mon feelings of humanity, altogether unworthy of admiration or sympathy. We shall endeavor in our analysis of her character to show that she possesses the feelings and much of the tenderness natural to a woman; and further, what are the motives and the influences that cause her to aid in so foul and so treacherous a murder.

When first we see Lady Macbeth she is reading the letter from her husband, in which he recounts to her, his "dearest partner of greatness," his successes, his superstitions, and his hopes. From her comments on the letter we perceive that she has studied well her husband's character, admires his greatness, and wishes for him all that he wishes for himself. We can perceive no tone of selfishness in her ambition. Her whole soul is wrapped up in his schemes for his own advancement, and the part she assigns to herself is the furtherance of these schemes; knowing his weakness she resolves to use the whole force of her superior will to keep him in the course he has traced out for himself. "Hie thee hither," she says,

> That I may pour my spirits in thine ear;
> And chastise with the valour of my tongue
> All that impedes thee from the golden round,
> Which fate and metaphysical aid doth seem
> To have thee crown'd withal.—I. v. 28.

When husband and wife meet, a few moments later, her admiration is expressed in the greeting, "Great Glamis! worthy Cawdor!" while he, in terms of fondness, addresses her as "My dearest love." Elsewhere in the play the bond of love and confidence which unites them is indicated by such expressions as "gentle my lord," and "worthy thane," on the one hand, and on the other, "my love," "dear wife," and "dearest chuck." After the murder of Duncan, she exerts all her powers to give her husband courage and to support him in his weakness. In the banquet scene, when his superstitious fears and loss of self-command threaten certain ruin to both, she utters no word of

reproach, but strives only to comfort and to excuse him. "You lack the season of all natures, sleep," is the excuse she makes for the fatal mistake he has committed.

Her feminine nature is evident in her devotion to her lord. Her cruelty is not natural, but is rather the result of the temporary repression of her nature by the force of her will. Where another woman might have struggled against the sinful promptings of her heart, she struggles violently against the softer side of her nature:

> Come, you spirits
> That tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here,
> And fill me, from the crown to the toe, top-full
> Of direst cruelty!—I. v. 42.

Such is her prayer to the powers of evil, "murdering ministers," when, for the sake of her husband, she resolves to commit the murder that he may be saved the hateful task; and such is her longing to serve him, that she would do it but for a feeling of tenderness against which she has not thought to steel herself:

> Had he not resembled
> My father as he slept, I had done 't.—II. ii. 12.

Thus her motive for the crime appears to be her unselfish love for her husband, for whom she wills the highest glory which he can attain.

We need not multiply instances of her will power, but only suggest how fearful must have been the inward struggle before she returned to the chamber of death, to place the daggers by the side of the murdered Duncan. Her singleness of purpose is to be attributed in great measure to her lack of imagination. She sees no ghosts; no witches lie in wait for her. Her practical nature perceives the direct road to success, and until the climax is reached she never falters. While her husband's strength lies in action, hers is in the sphere of thought. But in her thoughts she admits no compunctious visitings of nature. "The

attempt and not the deed confounds us,'' and ''What need we fear who knows it, when none can call our power to account,'' express her view of the murder, and her hopes for the realization of her husband's ambition,

> Which shall to all our nights and days to come
> Give solely sovereign sway and masterdom.—I. v. 71.

Although Lady Macbeth succeeds for a time in stifling her conscience, and although she refrains from all outward expression of remorse, Shakespeare has, most skilfully, shown that such feelings did at times threaten to visit her. When she chides her husband in the words,

> These deeds must not be thought
> After these ways; so, it will make us mad (II. ii. 32),

we may believe she feels the early premonitions of the fate that eventually overtakes her. When at last her mind gives way under the fearful strain she has put upon it, her unconscious utterances show us something of the nature which she has all the time been striving in vain to annihilate. Her stifled remorse reveals itself in her agitated sleep, in the awful sigh thrice repeated that bespeaks a heart ''sorely charged.'' In her assumed character she had once striven to encourage her husband by urging the fact that a little water would wash away the evidence of the deed, but now her natural feminine abhorrence of the sight and smell of blood finds expression in these heart-rending words, ''Here's the smell of the blood still: all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand. Oh, oh, oh!'' She has trusted too much to an unsafe reliance upon her human will.

''More needs she the divine than the physician.'' Her death was sudden and self-inflicted. In the awfulness of her end we are constrained to suspend judgment upon her crimes, and to repeat with the doctor, 'God, God forgive us all!'

''In the mind of Lady Macbeth, ambition is represented as

the ruling motive, an intense overmastering passion, which is gratified at the expense of every just and generous principle, and every feminine feeling. In the pursuit of her object, she is cruel, treacherous, and daring. She is doubly, trebly dyed in guilt and blood; for the murder she instigated is rendered more frightful by disloyalty and ingratitude, and by the violation of all the most sacred claims of kindred and hospitality. When her husband's more kindly nature shrinks from the perpetration of the deed of horror, she, like an evil genius, whispers him on to his damnation. The full measure of her wickedness is never disguised, the magnitude and atrocity of her crime are never extenuated, forgotten, or forgiven, in the whole course of the play. . . . Yet she is not a mere monster of depravity, with whom we have nothing in common, nor a meteor whose destroying path we watch in ignorant fright and amaze. She is a terrible impersonation of evil passions and mighty powers, never so far removed from our own nature as to be cast beyond the pale of our sympathies; for the woman herself remains a woman to the last—still linked with her sex and with humanity . . .

"The power of religion alone could have controlled such a mind; but it is often the misfortune of a very proud, strong, and gifted spirit, without sense of religion, that, instead of looking upward to find a superior, it looks round and imagines it sees all things as subject to itself. Lady Macbeth is placed in a dark, ignorant, iron age; her powerful intellect is slightly tinged with its credulity and superstitions, but she has no religious feeling to restrain the force of will. She is a stern fatalist in principle and action—'what is done, is done,' and would be done over again under the same circumstances: her remorse is without repentance, or any reference to an offended Deity; it arises from the pang of a wounded conscience, the recoil of the violated feelings of nature; it is the horror of the past, not the terror of the future; the torture of self-condemnation, not the fear of judg-

ment; it is strong as her soul, deep as her guilt, fatal as her resolve, and terrible as her crime."—*Mrs. Jameson.**

Banquo

Banquo acts as a foil to Macbeth. They are both brave and successful generals, and they are exposed to the same temptations, but because their characters are opposed, their actions and careers present strong contrasts. Banquo's bravery is not inferior to that of Macbeth. They are spoken of together, "As cannons overcharged with double cracks," and Macbeth gives testimony to "his royalty of nature," when he says:

> Reigns that which would be fear'd; 'tis much he dares,
> And, to that dauntless temper of his mind,
> He hath a wisdom that doth guide his valour
> To act in safety.—III. i. 50.

The nobility of Banquo's nature is evidenced when Duncan greets the victorious generals on their return from battle. His modesty is no less remarkable than his freedom from envy. When Duncan says,

> Noble Banquo,
> Thou hast no less deserved, nor must be known
> No less to have done so, let me infold thee
> And hold thee to my heart (I. iv. 29),

he modestly replies,

> There if I grow,
> The harvest is your own (I. iv. 32),

and a moment later, he entertains the king with "commendations" (not expressed in the play) of his more ambitious colleague. His speech before Macbeth's castle, I. vi. 3-10, and the imagery he employs in connection with Fleance, II. i. 4, 5, give evidence of a refined and poetic nature.

* Jameson, Mrs., née Anna Brownell Murphy, born at Dublin, Ireland, 1794; died, 1860. An Irish authoress and essayist.

Although Banquo first addresses the Witches, in the opening scene, it is noticeable that they make no reply, and utter no word until Macbeth has conjured them to speak. When they do speak it is in reply, not to Banquo's questions, but to the unexpressed thoughts of Macbeth, who starts and seems to fear "things that do sound so fair." Upon reflection, Banquo recognizes in the Witches "instruments of darkness," against which he must put himself on his guard, for "oftentimes," he says, "to win us to our harm" they tell us truths,

> Win us with honest trifles, to betray 's
> In deepest consequence.—I. iii. 126.

His own mind is not free from superstition, nor from a slight tinge of ambition, but he struggles against temptation and battles with the evil thoughts that assail him. The conflict is a stern one; he dare not even sleep:

> A heavy summons lies like lead upon me,
> And yet I would not sleep: merciful powers,
> Restrain in me the cursed thoughts that nature
> Gives way to in respose!—II. i. 6.

The contrast between his open, honest nature and the darker and more dissembling character of Macbeth, is clearly brought out in their conversation on the subject of the Witches:

Ban.: I dreamt last night of the three weird sisters:
To you they have show'd some truth.
Macb.: I think not of them:
Yet, when we can entreat an hour to serve,
We would spend it in some words upon that business,
If you would grant the time.
Ban.: At your kind'st leisure.
Macb.: If you shall cleave to my consent, when 'tis,
It shall make honour for you.
Ban.: So I lose none
In seeking to augment it, but still keep
My bosom franchised and allegiance clear,
I shall be counsell'd.—II. i. 20-9.

Yet, Banquo is not without his weakness. Ruin comes upon him through his carelessness and irresolution. He suspects Macbeth but does nothing in self-defense. He wilfully shuts his eyes to the enormity of Macbeth's crime against Duncan, and superstitiously accepts the murder as inevitable, taking comfort from the thought that,

> it was said
> It should not stand in thy posterity,
> But that myself should be the root and father
> Of many kings.—III. i. 3.

Thus by his inactivity and supineness he helps to bring about his own doom.

Macduff

Macduff acts an insignificant part in the earlier scenes of the play. No sooner is Banquo murdered, however, than Macduff comes into prominence, and exercises an important influence in shaping the course of events.

He is hated and feared by Macbeth, who feels conscious of his moral superiority. When Macbeth slays Duncan's chamberlains, Macduff sternly asks him, "Wherefore did you so?" and he shows no sympathy with the murderer. Although he possesses none of the secret information which Banquo holds, he has long regarded Macbeth with suspicion. When Macbeth goes to Scone Macduff expresses his fears, "Lest our old robes sit easier than our new!"

Unlike Banquo, who keeps his suspicions to himself, and is content to await events, Macduff, by his "broad words," and irreconcilable demeanor, brings upon himself the active hostility of the tyrant. He offends the usurper by refusing to attend the banquet; then, scenting danger, not only to himself but to his country, he flees to England for assistance. In contrast to Banquo he is intensely loyal and patriotic. He leaves his castle and his wife and children at the mercy of his enemies, that he

may stir Malcolm to stand and defend his "down-fallen birthdom." His patriotism shines through all his speeches; the sorrowful accents in which the words, "O Scotland, Scotland!" are uttered cannot fail to convince the most distrustful. Such sincerity wins even the suspicious Malcolm, who at last places himself unreservedly in his hands. Macduff is a man of few words, and in this respect is a contrast to Macbeth. When the other leaders discuss their fears and their hopes, Macduff remains silent, or interposes only to end the discussion and urge caution,

> Let our just censures
> Attend the true event, and put we on
> Industrious soldiership.—V. iv. 14.

When he meets Macbeth upon the field of battle he wastes no time in violent abuse or empty threats—

> I have no words:
> My voice is in my sword: thou bloodier villain
> Than terms can give thee out.—V. viii. 6.

"So noble, so blameless, so clement, we should think Macduff entirely wanting in that goad of sharp ambition necessary to make him a victorious opponent of Macbeth, and to enable him to stand his ground against that mighty and infuriated man; the poet, therefore, by the horrible extermination of his family, divests him of the milk of human kindness, and makes him by this means at once fitted to be the conqueror of Macbeth. This is wonderfully shown by a couple of strokes in that scene between Macduff and Malcolm. When he hears the dreadful news, he silently draws his hat over his brows and conceals his sorrow. 'My children, too? My wife killed, too?' are his only words, and then the self-reproach: 'And I must be from thence?' Malcolm bids him seek comfort in revenge. He heeds him not. 'He has no children!' . . . The most famous actors of Macduff in Garrick's time, Wilks and Ryan, saw in these words only the deepest expression of paternal agony, out of which Macduff arises

only by degrees to composure and the desire for revenge. Nothing can be plainer than this. . . . Malcolm reminds him once more to make this 'the whetstone of his sword.' And even now Macduff feels himself only divided between his fatherly feelings and his desire for vengeance; he could play the woman with his eyes, and braggart with his tongue. And now at length he yields to the thirst for revenge, which longs for action with the impatience of Macbeth, and is not to be appeased with words and delays."—*Gervinus.**

Malcolm

The character of Malcolm presents no difficulty to the student of the drama. His distinguishing characteristic is caution, and in this respect he is a contrast to almost all the other personages in the play. He is as suspicious as his father, Duncan, was trusting. On Duncan's assassination he flees to England to avoid Macbeth's "murderous shaft," which he feels is aimed at him. He distrusts the "good Macduff," and is slow to accept his protestations of patriotism and loyalty. As king, he possesses many royal graces, and therein forms a contrast to the tyrant Macbeth. Himself the son of a "most sainted king" and a saintly mother, and favored during his stay in England by the constant society of the pious Edward, he seems to have imbibed a religious spirit differing much from the superstition and sense of security which distinguish several of the other characters. He thus describes himself:

> Scarcely have coveted what was mine own,
> At no time broke my faith, would not betray
> The devil to his fellow, and delight
> No less in truth than life:—IV. iii. 119.

The rough experiences through which he passes develop his character, and his assumption of the crown opens a new era of prosperity and civilization for Scotland.

* See footnote, p. 24.

The Witches

The Witches can hardly be said to possess individual characters any more than they possess distinctive names. They may be regarded as sexless, for Banquo says to them,

> You should be women,
> And yet your beards forbid me to interpret
> That you are so—I. iii. 45.

They may be looked upon as the incarnation of all wickedness and all temptation, not only that which comes from without, but more particularly that which proceeds from within one's own heart. Their powers, their characteristics, and the influence they exert upon the destinies of "human mortals" have been referred to earlier in the Introduction, and need no further discussion.

XIV. THE TRUE ACCOUNT OF THE MACBETH PERIOD OF SCOTTISH HISTORY

The fact that the chronicle of Holinshed departs in many important respects from historic truth has been well established. It is not, however, easy, with the materials at hand, to arrive at anything like a complete and connected account of the history of the Macbeth period; but the following brief outline, derived from authentic sources, may, so far as it goes, be considered to represent fact as opposed to fiction.

Malcolm II was succeeded in 1034 by his grandson Duncan, who reigned till 1040, and who married a daughter of the Northumbrian Earl, Siward. After marching south and making an unsuccessful attempt upon Durham, Duncan was compelled to return to Scotland to resist the invasion of his kinsman, Thorfinn, who at that time held the Orkneys, Caithness, Sutherland, and the Hebrides. Duncan was defeated by Thorfinn on the Pentland Firth, and was killed at Bothgownan, near Elgin, by his own general, Macbeth.

Macbeth was the son of Finlay, mormaer (or earl) of Moray, whose wife, Gruoch, was the granddaughter of Kenneth II, the father of Malcolm II. Thus Macbeth had some title to the sovereignty, if it could descend by females. Macbeth reigned for seventeen years, from 1040 to 1057. He seems to have been an able and a popular monarch; he successfully repelled the attacks of Siward on behalf of his grandson. He fell in the battle of Lumphanan, in Mar, fighting against the young Malcolm, aided by Tostig, the son of Earl Godwine. Macbeth was succeeded on the throne by Lulach, a former mormaer of Moray, who, however, reigned for only a few months, and was slain at Essie in Strathbagie (N.W. Aberdeen). He was succeeded by Malcolm Cammore (1058-93), who had spent his youth at the court of Edward the Confessor.

These few facts are all that can be regarded as historical. The rest of Holinshed's account is fiction.

Nothing is known of the rebellious Thane of Cawdor; nor was there in Duncan's reign any invasion by Sweno. The name of Banquo does not appear in any authentic records, nor is that of Fleance to be found among the ancestry of James I. Macbeth, so far from being defeated by "Old Siward, with ten thousand warlike men," had been successful in driving the Northumbrian Earl out of his kingdom, and outlived him. Nothing is known of the manner of Lady Macbeth's death or of the existence of Lady Macduff.

XV. ABSTRACT OF THE PLAY

(Abbreviated from Lamb's Tales from Shakespeare)

Act I, Scene ii. When Duncan the Meek reigned king of Scotland there lived a great thane, or lord, called Macbeth. This Macbeth was a near kinsman to the king, and was held in great esteem at court for his valor and conduct in the wars, an example of which he had lately given, in defeating a rebel army assisted by the troops of Norway in terrible numbers.

Act I, Scene iii. The two Scottish generals, Macbeth and Banquo, returned victorious from this great battle. Their way lay over a blasted heath, where they were stopped by the strange appearance of three figures, like women, except that they had beards and their withered skins and wild attire made them look not like any earthly creatures. Banquo first addressed them, when they, seemingly offended, laid each her choppy finger upon her skinny lips, in token of silence; then the first saluted Macbeth with the title "Thane of Glamis;" and the second called him "Thane of Cawdor," and the third cried out "All hail! king that shall be hereafter!" Such a prophetic greeting not a little amazed him, for he knew that while the king's sons lived he could not hope to succeed to the throne. Then turning to Banquo they pronounced him, in riddling terms, to be lesser than Macbeth and greater! not so happy, but much happier! and prophesied that though he should never reign, yet his sons after him should be kings in Scotland. They then vanished.

While they stood pondering on the strangeness of this adventure, there arrived certain messengers from the king who were empowered to confer upon Macbeth the dignity of Thane of Cawdor. An event so mysteriously corresponding with the prediction of the witches astonished Macbeth, and he stood rapt in amazement, unable to make reply to the messengers: then swelling hopes arose in his mind that the prediction of the third witch might in like manner have its accomplishment, and that he should one day reign king in Scotland. Turning to Banquo, he said, "Do you not hope that your children shall be kings, when what the witches promised to me has so wonderfully come to pass?" "That hope," answered the general, "might induce you to aim at the throne: but oftentimes these ministers of darkness tell us truths in little things to betray us into deeds of greatest consequence." But the wicked suggestions of the witches had sunk too deep into the mind of Macbeth to allow him to attend to the warnings of the good Banquo. From that

time he bent all his thoughts how to compass the throne of Scotland.

Act I, Scene v. Macbeth communicated to his wife the strange prediction of the weird sisters. She was a bad, ambitious woman, and cared not by what means she and her husband could arrive at greatness.

Act I, Scenes v, vi, and vii. She spurred on the reluctant purpose of Macbeth to murder the king, and she did not cease to represent his murder as a step absolutely necessary to the fulfilment of the flattering prophecy.

It happened at this time that the king came to Macbeth's house attended by his two sons, Malcolm and Donalbain, and a numerous train of thanes and attendants, the more to honor Macbeth for the triumphal success of his wars. The king entered the castle, well pleased with the place, and not less so with the attentions and respect of his honored hostess, Lady Macbeth, who had the art of covering treacherous purposes with smiles, and of looking like the innocent flower while she was indeed the serpent under it. The king, being tired with his journey, went early to bed, and in his stateroom two grooms of his chamber (as was the custom) slept beside him. He had been unusually pleased with his reception, and had made presents, before he retired, to his principal officers, and had sent a rich diamond to Lady Macbeth, greeting her by the name of his most kind hostess.

Act II, Scenes i and ii. Now was the middle of the night, when over half the world nature seems dead, and wicked dreams abuse men's minds asleep, and none but the wolf and the murderer is abroad. This was the time when Lady Macbeth waked to plot the murder of the king. She would not have undertaken a deed so abhorrent to her sex but that she feared her husband's nature, that it was too full of the milk of human kindness to do a contrived murder. She knew him to be ambitious, but she doubted his resolution. So with her own hands, armed with a

dagger, she approached the king's bed, having taken care to ply the grooms of his chamber so with wine that they slept intoxicated and careless of their charge. There lay Duncan, in a sound sleep after the fatigues of his journey, and as she viewed him earnestly, there was something in his face, which so much resembled her own father, that she had not the courage to proceed.

She returned to confer with her husband, whose resolution had begun to stagger. She found him in a conflict of mind inclining to the better part, and resolving to proceed no further. But she, being a woman not easily shaken from her evil purpose, began to pour in at his ears words which infused a portion of her own spirit into his mind, assigning reason upon reason why he should not shrink from what he had undertaken; how easy the deed was; how soon it would be over; and how the action of one short night would give to all their nights and days to come sovereign sway and royalty! Then she threw contempt on his change of purpose, and accused him of fickleness and cowardice. Then she added how practicable it was to lay the guilt of the deed upon the drunken, sleepy grooms. And with the valor of her tongue she so chastised his sluggish resolutions, that he once more summoned up courage to the bloody business.

So, taking the dagger in his hand, he softly stole in the dark to the room where Duncan lay; and as he went, he thought he saw another dagger in the air, with the handle towards him, and on the blade and at the point of it drops of blood; but when he tried to grasp at it, it was nothing but air, a mere phantasm proceeding from his own hot and oppressed brain and the business he had in hand. Getting rid of this fear, he entered the king's room, and dispatched him with one stroke of his dagger.

With his mind full of horrible imaginations, Macbeth returned to his listening wife, who began to think he had failed of his purpose, and that the deed was somehow frustrated. He came in so distracted a state that she reproached him with his

want of firmness, and sent him to wash his hands of the blood which stained them, while she took his dagger, with purpose to stain the cheeks of the grooms with blood, to make it seem their guilt.

Act II, Scene iii. Morning came, and with it the discovery of the murder, which could not be concealed; and though Macbeth and his lady made great show of grief, and the proofs against the grooms were strong, yet the entire suspicion fell upon Macbeth, whose inducements to such a deed were so much more forcible than such poor, silly grooms could be supposed to have; and Duncan's two sons fled. Malcolm, the eldest, sought refuge in the English court; and the youngest, Donalbain, made his escape to Ireland.

Act II, Scene iv. The king's sons, who should have succeeded him, having thus vacated the throne, Macbeth as next heir was crowned king, and thus the prediction of the weird sisters was literally accomplished.

Act III, Scenes i, ii, and iii. Though placed so high, Macbeth could not forget the prophecy of the weird sisters, that, though he should be king, yet not his children, but the children of Banquo, should be kings after him. The thought of this, and that he had defiled his hands with blood, and done so great crimes, only to place the posterity of Banquo upon the throne, so rankled within him that he determined to put to death both Banquo and his son, to make void the predictions of the weird sisters, which in his own case had been so remarkably brought to pass. For this purpose he made a great supper, to which he invited all the chief thanes, among them being Banquo and his son Fleance. The way by which Banquo was to pass to the palace at night was beset by murderers appointed by Macbeth. They stabbed Banquo, but in the scuffle Fleance escaped.

Act III, Scene iv. At supper the queen played the hostess with a gracefulness and attention which conciliated every one present, and Macbeth discoursed freely with his thanes and

nobles, saying that all that was honorable in the country was under his roof if he had but his good friend Banquo present, whom yet he hoped he should rather have to chide for neglect than to lament for any mischance. Just at these words the ghost of Banquo entered the room and placed himself on the chair which Macbeth was about to occupy. Though Macbeth was a bold man, at this horrible sight his cheeks turned white with fear, and he stood quite unmanned, with his eyes fixed upon the ghost. His queen and all the nobles, who saw nothing, but perceived him gazing (as they thought) upon an empty chair, took it for a fit of distraction; and she reproached him, whispering that it was but the same fancy which had made him see the dagger in the air when he was about to kill Duncan. But Macbeth continued to see the ghost, and gave no heed to all they could say, while he addressed it with distracted words, yet so significant that his queen, fearing the dreadful secret would be disclosed, in great haste dismissed the guests, excusing the infirmity of Macbeth as a disorder he was often troubled with.

To such dreadful fancies Macbeth was subject, and being troubled at the escape of Fleance, he determined once more to seek out the weird sisters and know from them the worst.

Act IV, Scene i. He sought them in a cave upon the heath, where they, who knew by foresight of his coming, were engaged in preparing their dreadful charms, horrid ingredients, by means of which they conjured up infernal spirits to reveal to them futurity.

It was demanded of Macbeth whether he would have his doubts resolved by them or by their masters, the spirits. He, nothing daunted by the dreadful ceremonies which he saw, boldly answered, "Where are they? let me see them." And they called the spirits, which were three. And the first arose in the likeness of an armed head, and he called Macbeth by name, and bid him beware of the Thane of Fife, for which caution Macbeth thanked him, for Macbeth had entertained a jealousy

of Macduff, the Thane of Fife. And the second spirit arose in the likeness of a bloody child, and he called Macbeth by name, and bid him have no fear, but laugh to scorn the power of man, for none of woman born should have power to hurt him: and he advised him to be bloody, bold, and resolute. "Then live, Macduff!" cried the king; "what need I fear of thee? but yet I will make assurance doubly sure. Thou shalt not live; that I may tell pale-hearted Fear it lies, and sleep in spite of thunder." That spirit being dismissed, a third arose, in the form of a child crowned, with a tree in his hand. He called Macbeth by name, and comforted him against conspiracies, saying that he should never be vanquished until the wood of Birnam to Dunsinane Hill should come against him. "Sweet bodements! good!" cried Macbeth; "who can unfix the forest and move it from its earth-bound roots? I see I shall live the usual period of man's life, and not be cut off by a violent death. But my heart throbs to know one thing. Tell me, if your art can tell so much, if Banquo's issue shall ever reign in this kingdom?" Here the cauldron sunk into the ground, and a noise of music was heard, and eight shadows, like kings, passed by Macbeth, and Banquo last, who bore a glass which showed the figures of many more; and Banquo, all bloody, smiled upon Macbeth, and pointed to them, by which Macbeth knew that these were the posterity of Banquo, who should reign after him in Scotland; and the witches, with a sound of soft music, and with dancing, making a show of duty and welcome to Macbeth, vanished. And from this time the thoughts of Macbeth were all bloody and dreadful.

The first thing he heard when he got out of the witches' cave was that Macduff had fled to England.

Act IV, Scene ii. Stung with rage, he set upon his castle and put Macduff's wife and children, whom the thane had left behind, to the sword, and extended the slaughter to all who claimed the least relationship to Macduff.

Act IV, Scene iii. These and such like deeds alienated the minds of all his chief nobility from him.

Act V, Scenes i and iv. Such as could, fled to join with Malcolm and Macduff, who were now approaching with a powerful army which they had raised in England; and the rest secretly wished success to their arms, though for fear of Macbeth they could take no active part. His recruits went on slowly. Everybody hated the tyrant; nobody loved or honored him, but all suspected him, and he began to envy the condition of Duncan, whom he had murdered, who slept soundly in his grave, against whom treason had done its worst: neither steel nor poison, domestic malice nor foreign levies, could hurt him any longer.

Act V, Scene v. While these things were acting, the queen, who had been the sole partner in his wickedness, in whose bosom he could sometimes seek a momentary repose from those terrible dreams which afflicted them both nightly, died, it is supposed by her own hands, unable to bear the remorse of guilt and public hate; by which event he was left alone, without a soul to love or care for him, or a friend to whom he could confide his wicked purposes.

He grew careless of life, and wished for death; but the near approach of Malcolm's army roused in him what remained of his ancient courage, and he determined to die (as he expressed it) "with armor on his back." Besides this, the hollow promises of the witches had filled him with false confidence, and he remembered the sayings of the spirits, that none of woman born was to hurt him, and that he was never to be vanquished till Birnam Wood should come to Dunsinane, which he thought could never be. Se he shut himself up in his castle, whose impregnable strength was such as defied a siege. Here he sullenly awaited the approach of Malcolm. When, upon a day, there came a messenger to him, pale and shaking with fear, almost unable to report that which he had seen; for he averred that as he stood upon his watch on the hill, he looked towards Birnam,

and to his thinking the wood began to move! Macbeth now began to faint in resolution and to doubt the equivocal speeches of the spirits. "However," said he, "if this which he avouches be true, let us arm and out. There is no flying hence, nor staying here. I begin to be weary of the sun, and wish my life at an end." With these desperate speeches he sallied forth upon the besiegers, who had now come up to the castle.

Act V, Scenes iv and vi. The strange appearance, which had given the messenger an idea of a wood moving, is easily solved. When the besieging army marched through the wood of Birnam, Malcolm, like a skilful general, instructed his soldiers to hew down every one a bough and bear it before him, by way of concealing the true numbers of his host. Thus were the words of the spirit brought to pass in a sense different from that in which Macbeth had understood them, and one great hold of his confidence was gone.

Act V, Scene vii. And now a severe skirmishing took place in which Macbeth, though feebly supported, yet fought with the extreme of rage and valor, cutting to pieces all who were opposed to him, till he came to where Macduff was fighting.

Act V, Scene viii. Seeing Macduff, and remembering the caution of the spirit who had counseled him to avoid Macduff above all men, he would have turned, but Macduff who had been seeking him through the whole fight opposed his turning, and a fierce contest ensued. Then Macbeth remembered the words of the spirit, how none of woman born should hurt him; and smiling confidently, he said to Macduff: "Thou losest thy labor, Macduff. As easily thou mayest impress the air with thy sword as make me vulnerable. I bear a charmed life which must not yield to one of woman born." "Despair thy charm," said Macduff, "and let that lying spirit whom thou hast served tell thee that Macduff was never born of woman, never as the ordinary manner of men is to be born, but was untimely taken from his mother." "Accursed be the tongue which tells me so," said the

trembling Macbeth, who felt his last hold of confidence give way; "and let never man in future believe the lying equivocations of witches and juggling spirits who deceive us in words which have double senses; and while they keep their promise literally, disappoint our hopes with a different meaning. I will not fight with thee."

"Then, live!" said Macduff; "we will have a show of thee as men show monsters, and a painted board on which shall be written, 'Here men may see the tyrant!'" "Never," said Macbeth, whose courage returned with despair; "I will not live to kiss the ground before young Malcolm's feet, and to be baited with the curses of the rabble. Though Birnam Wood be come to Dunsinane, and thou opposed to me who wast never born of woman, yet I will try the last." With these frantic words he threw himself upon Macduff who, after a severe struggle, in the end overcame him, and, cutting off his head, made a present of it to the young and lawful king, Malcolm, who took upon him the government which, by the machinations of the usurper, he had so long been deprived of, and ascended the throne of Duncan the Meek amid the acclamations of the nobles and the people."

XVI. TIME OF ACTION OF THE PLAY

The length of time supposed to be covered by the events of the play is nine days, with intervals.

DAY 1. Act I. Scenes i.-iii. DAY 3. Act II. Scenes i.-iv.
DAY 2. Act I. Scenes iv.-vii.

Interval of a week or two.

DAY 4. Act III. Scenes i.-v.
Act III. Scene vi. "An impossible time."
DAY 5. Act IV. Scene i. DAY 6. Act IV. Scene ii.

Interval of a week or two.

DAY 7. Act IV. Scene iii. Act V. Scene i.

Interval of a few weeks.

DAY 8. Act V. Scenes ii.-iii. DAY 9. Act. V. Scenes iv.-viii.

Thus the time over which the events of the play extend is about two months. The intervals, however, in the computation given above, seem to be much too short. Macbeth, V, iii. 21, says:

> My way of life
> Is fall'n into the sear, the yellow leaf,

implying that he has already reached old age. At the opening of the play he appears to be in the prime of life, and though he may have aged rapidly, yet we ought to regard the events of the play as extending over some years rather than a few months. Shakespeare's wonderful art, however, has made the events recorded in the play appear to succeed one another with such rapidity, that we neglect to take into account the intervals which necessity demands for their ripening.

MACBETH

Dramatis Personæ.

DUNCAN, *King of Scotland.*
MALCOLM, } *His Sons.*
DONALBAIN, }
MACBETH, } *Generals of the*
BANQUO, } *King's Army.*
MACDUFF, }
LENNOX, }
ROSS, } *Noblemen of Scotland.*
MENTEITH, }
ANGUS, }
CAITHNESS, }
FLEANCE, *Son to Banquo.*
SIWARD, *Earl of Northumberland, General of the English Forces.*
YOUNG SIWARD, *his Son.*
SEYTON, *an Officer attending on Macbeth.*
Boy, son to Macduff.
An English Doctor.
A Scotch Doctor.
A Soldier.
A Porter.
An Old Man.
LADY MACBETH.
LADY MACDUFF.
Gentlewoman attending on Lady Macbeth.
HECATE, *three Witches.*
Lords, Gentlemen, Officers, Soldiers, Murderers, Attendants, and Messengers.
The Ghost of Banquo and other Apparitions.

SCENE: *Scotland; in the end of the Fourth Act, in England.*

ACT I.

SCENE I. *A Desert Place.*

Thunder and lightning. Enter three Witches.

1 Witch. When shall we three meet again
In thunder, lightning, or in rain?
2 Witch. When the *hurlyburly's*[1] done,
When the battle's lost and won.
3 Witch. That will be ere the set of sun.
1 Witch. Where the place?
2 Witch. Upon the heath.
3 Witch. There to meet with Macbeth.

[1] *noise and confusion of battle*

1 Witch. I come, *Graymalkin!*[1]
All. *Paddock*[2] calls:— *Anon!*—[3]
All. Fair is foul, and foul is fair:*
Hover[4] through the fog and filthy air. [*Exeunt.*

[1] *the name of a cat*
[2] *the name of a toad*
[3] *immediately*
[4] *let us hover*

Scene II. *A Camp near Forres.*

Alarum[5] *within.* *Enter King* Duncan, Malcolm, Donalbain, Lennox, *with Attendants, meeting a bleeding Sergeant.*

Dun. What bloody man is that? He can report,
As seemeth by his plight, of the revolt
The newest state.[6]
Mal. This is the sergeant
Who, like a good and *hardy*[7] soldier fought
'Gainst my captivity. *Hail,*[8] brave friend!
Say to the king the knowledge of the *broil*[9]
As thou didst leave it.
Ser. Doubtful it stood;
As two *spent*[10] swimmers that do cling together
And *choke their art.*[11] The merciless Macdonwald—
Worthy to be a rebel, for to *that*[12]
The multiplying villanies of nature
Do swarm upon him†—from the *Western Isles*[13]
Of *kerns*[14] and *gallowglasses*[15] is supplied;
But all's too weak:
For brave Macbeth—well he deserves that name—
Disdaining fortune,[16] with his brandish'd steel,
Which smoked with bloody execution,
Like valour's *minion*[17] carved out his passage
Till *he*[18] faced the slave;
Which ne'er shook hands,‡ nor bade farewell to *him*[19]
Till he unseam'd him from the *nave*[20] to the chaps,
And fix'd his head upon our battlements.

[5] *a call to arms*
[6] i.e. *he can give the latest news*
[7] *valiant*
[8] *a dissyllable*
[9] *battle*
[10] *exhausted*
[11] *render their skill useless*
[12] *that end;* i. e. *to be a rebel*
[13] i.e. *of Scotland*
[14] *light-armed troops*
[15] *heavy-armed troops*
[16] *disregarding the rebel's apparent success*
[17] *favorite, darling*
[18] *Macbeth*
[19] *Macdonwald*
[20] *navel*

*What is fair to others is foul to us, and what we find fair is foul in the eyes of others. *I.e.* We love what others hate and hate what they love.

†Nature has crowded within him innumerable qualities of wickedness.

‡Who did not shake hands with death, *i.e.* did not die.

Dun. O valiant *cousin!*[1] worthy gentleman!
Ser. As whence the sun 'gins his reflection
Shipwrecking storms and direful thunders break,
So from that spring whence comfort seem'd to come
Discomfort swells.* Mark, King of Scotland, mark:
No sooner justice had, with valour arm'd,
Compell'd these skipping kerns to trust their heels,
But the *Norweyan lord,*[2] *surveying vantage,*[3]
With *furbish'd*[4] arms and new supplies of men,
Began a fresh assault.
Dun. Dismay'd not this
Our captains, Macbeth and Banquo?
Ser. Yes;
As sparrows eagles, or the hare the lion.
If I say *sooth,*[5] I must report they were
As *cannons*[6] *overcharged with double cracks;*[7] so they
Doubly redoubled strokes upon the foe:
Except they meant to bathe in reeking wounds,
Or *memorize*[8] another Golgotha,
I cannot tell—
But I am faint; my gashes cry for help.
Dun. So well thy words become thee as thy wounds;
They smack of honour both. Go, get him surgeons.
[*Exit Sergeant, attended.*

Enter ROSS.

Who comes here?
Mal. The worthy *thane*[9] of Ross.
Len. What a haste looks through his eyes! So should he look
That *seems*[10] to speak things strange.
Ross. God save the king!
Dun. Whence camest thou, worthy thane?
Ross. From Fife, great king;
Where the Norweyan banners *flout*[11] the sky
And fan our people cold.† *Norway*[12] himself

[1] see note I. ii. 23, p. 151

[2] i.e *Sweno.* See I. ii. 58

[3] *seeing an opening*

[4] *burnished, unstained by use*

[5] *truth*

[6] *an anachronism*

[7] *filled with charges powerful enough to give a doubly loud report*

[8] *make the place memorable as*

[9] *a title, almost equal to that of Earl*

[10] *seems about*

[11] *mock*

[12] *the King of Norway*

*As terrible storms often originate in the east, the quarter from which the (comforting) sun begins his course, so now trouble arises in that very quarter to which Macbeth's victory had seemed to bring comfort.

†Where the Norwegian banners flap gaily in the wind and serve only to cool the victors.

With terrible numbers,
Assisted by that most disloyal traitor
The thane of Cawdor, began *a dismal*[1] conflict;
Till that *Bellona's*[2] bridegroom, *lapp'd in proof*,[3]
Confronted him with self-comparisons,
Point against point rebellious, arm 'gainst arm,
Curbing his lavish spirit:* and, to conclude,
The victory fell on us.
Dun. Great happiness!
Ross. *That*[4] now
Sweno, the Norway's king, *craves composition;*[5]
Nor would we deign him burial of his men
Till he disbursèd, at *Saint Colme's Inch*[6]
Ten thousand *dollars*[7] to our general use.
Dun. No more that thane of Cawdor shall deceive
Our *bosom interest:*[8] go pronounce his *present*[9] death,
And with his former title greet Macbeth.
Ross. I'll see it done.
Dun. What he hath lost, noble Macbeth hath won. [*Exeunt.*

[1] *an ill-boding*
[2] *Roman goddess of war*
[3] *clad in proof armor*
[4] *so that*
[5] *humbly begs terms of settlement or peace*
[6] *Inchcolm, an island off the coast of Fife*
[7] *an anachronism*
[8] *the interests we have most at heart*
[9] *immediate*

Scene III. *A Heath, near Forres.*

Thunder. Enter the three Witches.

1 Witch. Where hast thou been, sister?
2 Witch. Killing swine.
3 Witch. Sister, where thou?
1 Witch. A sailor's wife had chestnuts in her lap,
And munch'd, and munch'd, and munch'd.
'Give me,' quoth I:
'*Aroint thee*,[10] witch!' the *rump-fed ronyon*[11] cries.
Her husband's to Aleppo gone, master o' the *Tiger*:[12]

[10] *stand off*
[11] *pampered, scurvy creature*
[12] *the name of a vessel*

*Encountered him in a hand-to-hand trial of strength, his own sword against the rebel's sword, checking his insolent spirit.

But in a sieve I'll thither sail,
And, *like*[1] a rat without a tail,
I'll do, I'll do, and I'll do.[2]
2 Witch. I'll give thee a wind.
1 Witch. Thou'rt kind.
3 Witch. And I another.
1 Witch. I myself have all the other;
And the very ports they blow,
All the quarters that they know
I' the *shipman's card,*[3]
I will drain him dry as hay:*
Sleep shall neither night nor day
Hang upon his *pent-house lid;*[4]
He shall live a man *forbid:*[5]
Weary *se'nnights, nine times nine*[6]
Shall he dwindle, *peak, and pine.*[7]
Though his bark cannot be lost,
Yet it shall be tempest-tost.
Look what I have.
2 Witch. Show me, show me.
1 Witch. Here I have a pilot's thumb,
Wreck'd as homeward he did come.
[*Drum within.*
3 Witch. A drum, a drum!
Macbeth doth come.
All. The *weird*[8] sisters, hand in hand,
Posters of[9] the sea and land,
Thus do go about, about:
Thrice to thine, and thrice to mine,
And thrice again, to make up nine.
Peace! the charm's wound up.

Enter MACBETH *and* BANQUO.

Macb. So foul and fair a day I have not seen.
Ban. How far is't call'd to Forres? What are these,
So wither'd, and so wild in their attire,
That look not like the inhabitants o' the earth,

[1] *in the form of*
[2] i.e. *I'll "do for" the ship, gnaw a hole in it*
[3] *compass card*
[4] *lids that overhang the eye (like the roof of a pent-house)*
[5] *under a ban or curse*
[6] *7 and 3, and 9 as the square of 3, are mystic numbers*
[7] *grow lean and waste away*
[8] *unearthly or fateful.* See Glossary
[9] *rapid travelers over*

*I. e. drain the blood from his body till he becomes all flesh and bone.

And yet are on 't? Live you? or are you aught
That man may question? You seem to understand me,
By each at once her *choppy*[1] finger laying
Upon her skinny lips: you should be women,
And yet your *beards*[2] forbid me to interpret
That you are so.

Macb. Speak, if you can: what are you?

1 Witch. All hail, Macbeth! hail to thee, thane of Glamis!

2 Witch. All hail, Macbeth! hail to thee, thane of Cawdor!

3 Witch. All hail, Macbeth! that shalt be king hereafter!

Ban. Good sir, why do you start, and seem to fear
Things that do sound so fair? I' the name of truth,
Are ye *fantastical*,[3] or that indeed
Which outwardly ye *show*?[4] My noble partner
You greet with present grace, and great prediction
Of noble having and of royal hope,*
That[5] he seems *rapt*[6] withal: to me you speak not.
If you can look into the seeds of time,
And say which grain will grow and which will not,
Speak then to me, who neither *beg nor fear*
Your favours nor your hate.[7]

1 Witch. Hail!

2 Witch. Hail!

3 Witch. Hail!

1 Witch. Lesser than Macbeth, and greater.

2 Witch. Not so happy, yet much happier.

3 Witch. Thou shalt get kings, though thou be none:

[1] *chapped*

[2] see Introduction, p. 35

[3] *creatures of the fancy or imagination*

[4] *appear to be*

[5] *so that*

[6] *carried beyond himself, transported*

[7] *beg your favors nor fear your hate*

*You greet by naming the honorable title which he already bears ("present grace") and by predicting for him a more noble possession ("great prediction of noble having") and even presenting a prospect which may lead him to hope for royalty ("prediction of royal hope").

So, all hail, Macbeth and Banquo!
1 Witch. Banquo and Macbeth, all hail!
Macb. *Stay,*[1] you *imperfect speakers,*[2] tell me more:
By *Sinel's*[3] death I know I am thane of Glamis;
But how of Cawdor? the thane of Cawdor lives,
A prosperous gentleman;* and to be king
Stands not within the prospect of belief,
No[4] more than to be Cawdor. Say, from whence
You *owe*[5] this strange intelligence? or why
Upon this *blasted*[6] heath you stop our way
With such prophetic greeting? Speak, I charge you. [*Witches vanish.*
Ban. The earth hath bubbles, as the water has,
And these are of them. Whither are they vanish'd?
Macb. Into the air, and what seem'd *corporal*[7] melted
As breath into the wind. Would they had stay'd!
Ban. Were such things here as we do speak about?
Or have we eaten on the *insane root*[8]
That *takes the reason prisoner?*[9]
Macb. Your children shall be kings.
Ban. You shall be king.
Macb. And thane of Cawdor too, went it not so?
Ban. To the selfsame tune and words. Who's here?

Enter ROSS *and* ANGUS.

Ross. The king hath happily received, Macbeth,
The news of thy success; and when he reads
Thy personal venture[10] in the rebel's fight,
His wonders and his praises do contend

[1] *not so fast*
[2] *who speak only a part of what you mean*
[3] *Macbeth's father*
[4] *any*
[5] *possess*
[6] *withered, blighted*
[7] *corporeal, substantial*
[8] *root causing madness, henbane or hemlock*
[9] *renders the reason useless or inoperative*
[10] *the venture of thy person*

*See Note, I. iii. 72, p. 152.

Which should be thine or his: silenced with that,*
In viewing o'er the rest of the selfsame day,
He finds thee in the *stout*[1] Norweyan ranks,
Nothing afeard of *what thyself didst make*,[2]
Strange images of death. As thick as hail
Came post with post; and every one did bear
Thy praises[3] in his kingdom's great defence,
And pour'd them down before him.
Ang. We are sent
To give thee from our royal master thanks;
Only to herald thee into his sight,
Not pay thee.
Ross. And, for an *earnest*[4] of a greater honour,
He bade me, from him, call thee thane of Cawdor:
In which *addition*,[5] hail, most worthy thane!
For it is thine.
Ban. What, can the devil speak true?
Macb. The thane of Cawdor lives: why do you dress me
In borrow'd robes?
Ang. *Who*[6] was the thane lives *yet*;[7]
But under heavy judgment bears that life
Which he deserves to lose. Whether he *was combined*[8]
With *those of Norway*,[9] or did *line*[10] the rebel
With hidden help and vantage, or that with *both*[11]
He labour'd *in*[12] his country's *wreck*,[13] I know not;
But treasons capital, confess'd and proved,
Have overthrown him.
Macb. [*Aside.*] Glamis, and thane of Cawdor:
The greatest is behind. [*To* Ross *and* Angus.] Thanks for your pains.
[*To* Banquo.] Do you not hope your children shall be kings,

[1] *bold and resolute*
[2] *explained in the next line "strange images," etc.*
[3] *praises of thy deeds*
[4] *assurance, pledge*
[5] *title*
[6] *he who*
[7] *still*
[8] *entered into a league*
[9] *the Norwegians*
[10] *strengthen (internally)*
[11] i.e. *both kinds of help*
[12] *toward*
[13] *ruin*

*The amazement with which he hears of thy great deeds ("his wonders") and the admiration which calls for expression ("his praises") dispute possession within him ("do contend which should be thine or his"), and as the one feeling neutralizes the other, he is consequently silent.

When those that gave the thane of Cawdor to me
Promised no less to them?
Ban. That, *trusted home,*[1] [1]*to the utmost*
Might yet enkindle you unto the crown,*
Besides the thane of Cawdor. But 'tis strange:
And oftentimes, to win us to our harm,
The *instruments of darkness*[2] tell us truths, [2]*the agents of the devil*
Win us with honest trifles, to betray 's
In deepest consequence.†
Cousins,[3] a word, I pray you. [3]*addressed to Ross and Angus*
Macb. [*Aside.*] Two truths are told,
As happy prologues to the swelling act
Of the imperial theme.—[*Aloud.*] I thank you, gentlemen.—
[*Aside.*] This supernatural *soliciting*[4] [4]*inciting*
Cannot be ill, cannot be good: if ill,
Why hath it given me *earnest*[5] of success, [5]*assurance, pledge*
Commencing in a truth? I am thane of Cawdor:
If good, why do I yield to that *suggestion*[6] [6]*temptation*
Whose horrid image[7] doth unfix my hair, [7]*the dreadful thought of which*
And make my *seated*[8] heart knock at my ribs, [8]*fixed, firmly set*
Against the use of nature? Present fears
Are less than horrible imaginings:‡ [9]*is an imaginary possibility*
My thought, whose murder yet is but *fantastical,*[9]
Shakes so my *single state of man,*[10] that function [10]*manhood*
Is smother'd in surmise, and nothing is
But what is not.¶
Ban. Look, how our partner 's *rapt.*[11] [11]*engrossed in thought*
Macb. [*Aside.*] If chance will have me king
why, chance *may*[12] crown me, [12]*may possibly*

*If you carry to its natural conclusion your trust in the witches, there may yet be kindled within you a hope of obtaining the crown.

†Obtain our confidence by dealing honestly with us in matters of no importance in order to deceive us in matters of the highest importance.

‡Actual dangers are less terrifying than the terrors which the imagination creates.

¶The meaning appears to be: "My power of action and faculty of thought (function) are overpowered by the crowd of horrible fancies that besets my mind (is smother'd in surmise), so that facts have no reality for me who am possessed only by imaginary possibilities."

Without *my stir.*[1]
Ban. New honours come upon him,
Like our strange garments, *cleave not to their mould*[2]
But with the aid of use.
Macb. [*Aside.*] Come what come may,
Time and the hour *runs*[3] through the roughest day,
Ban. Worthy Macbeth, we stay upon your leisure.
Macb. Give me your *favour:*[4] my dull brain was *wrought*[5]
With things forgotten. Kind gentlemen, your pains
Are register'd *where*[6] every day I turn
The leaf to read them. Let us *toward*[7] the king.
Think upon what hath chanced, and at more time,
The interim having[8] weigh'd it, let us speak
Our *free hearts*[9] each to other.
Ban. Very gladly.
Macb. Till then, enough.—Come, friends.
[*Exeunt.*

[1] *any action on my part*
[2] *do not fit*
[3] *run*
[4] *indulgence, pardon*
[5] *perplexed*
[6] i.e. *in my memory*
[7] sc. *go*
[8] *after having meanwhile*
[9] *hearts freely*

Scene IV. *Forres. A Room in the Palace.*

Flourish. Enter Duncan, Malcolm, Donalbain, Lennox, *and Attendants.*

Dun. Is execution done on Cawdor? Are not
Those in commission[10] yet return'd?
Mal. My liege,
They are not yet come back. But I have *spoke*[11]
With one that saw him die, who did report
That very frankly he confess'd his treasons,
Implored your highness' pardon, and *set forth*[12]
A deep repentance: nothing in his life
Became him like the leaving it; he died
As one that had been studied in his death,[13]
To throw away the *dearest thing*[14] he *owed*[15]
As 'twere a *careless*[16] trifle.
Dun. There's no art

[10] *those charged with the duty of carrying it out.* Cf. I. ii. 63
[11] *spoken*
[12] *showed*
[13] *as one who had studied, how to die*
[14] i.e. *his life*
[15] *possessed*
[16] *worthless*

To *find the mind's construction*[1] in the face:
He was a gentleman on whom I built
An absolute trust.

Enter MACBETH, BANQUO, ROSS, *and* ANGUS.

O worthiest cousin!
The sin of my ingratitude even now
Was heavy on me: thou art so far before,
That swiftest wing of recompense is slow
To overtake thee. Would thou hadst less deserved,
That the proportion both of thanks and payment
Might have been mine!* only I have left to say
More is thy due than more than *all*[2] can pay.
Macb. The service and the loyalty I owe,
In doing it, pays itself. Your highness' part
Is to receive our duties: and our duties
Are to your throne and state children and servants;
Which do but what they should, by doing everything
Safe toward your[3] love and honour.
Dun. Welcome hither:
I have begun to plant thee,† and will labour
To *make thee full of growing.*[4] Noble Banquo,
That hast no less deserved, *nor*[5] must be known
No[5] less to have done so, let me infold thee
And hold thee to my heart.
Ban. There if I grow,
The harvest is your own.
Dun. My plenteous joys,
Wanton in fulness[6] seek to hide themselves
In *drops of sorrow.*[7] Sons, kinsmen, thanes,
And you *whose places are the nearest,*[8] know,
We will establish *our estate*[9] upon
Our eldest, Malcolm, whom we name hereafter

[1] *interpret the mind*
[2] i.e. *all that I can do*
[3] *that is sure to show you*
[4] *raise thee to the highest possible degree of greatness*
[5] double negative
[6] *bubbling over*
[7] *tears*
[8] *rank nearest to ourselves*
[9] *the succession to the throne*

*That it might have been in my power to thank and reward thee in due proportion (to thy deserts).

†A metaphor, equivalent to "I have sown the seeds of thy greatness" (by granting thee the title of Thane of Cawdor). The metaphor is continued in the next line and in 32, 33.

The Prince of Cumberland: which honour must
Not unaccompanied *invest*[1] him only,
But *signs of nobleness*,[2] like stars, shall shine
On all deservers. From hence to Inverness,
And bind us further to you.

Macb. The rest is labour, which is not used for you:*
I'll be myself the *harbinger*[3] and make joyful
The hearing of my wife *with*[4] your approach;
So, humbly take my leave.

Dun. My worthy Cawdor!

Macb. [*Aside.*] The Prince of Cumberland! That is a step
On which I must fall down, or else o'erleap,
For in my way it lies. Stars, hide your fires;
Let not light see my black and deep desires:
The eye wink at[5] the hand; yet let that be
Which the eye fears, when it is done, to see. [*Exit.*

Dun. True, worthy Banquo; he is full so valiant,
And in his commendations I am fed;
It is a banquet to me. Let 's after him,
Whose care[6] is gone before to bid us welcome:
It[7] is a peerless kinsman. [*Flourish. Exeunt.*

[1] *endow*
[2] *distinguishing marks of rank*
[3] *forerunner*
[4] *with tidings of*
[5] *let the eye seem not to see*
[6] *who, in his care (for my welfare)*
[7] *he*

Scene V. *Inverness.* Macbeth's *Castle.*

Enter Lady Macbeth *reading a letter.*

Lady M. "They met me in the day of success; and I have learned by the perfectest *report*,[8] they have more in them than *mortal*[9] knowledge. When I burned in desire to question them further, they made themselves air, into which they vanished. Whiles I stood rapt in the wonder of it, came *missives*[10] from the king, who all-hailed me 'Thane of Cawdor;' by which title, before, these weird sisters saluted me, and *referred me to the coming on of time*,[11] with 'Hail,

[8] *testimony*
[9] *human*
[10] *messengers*
[11] *carried my mind into the future*

*Repose is weariness to me when it is not devoted to your service.

king that shalt be!' This have I thought good to deliver thee, my dearest partner of greatness, that thou mightest not lose the *dues of rejoicing*[1] by being ignorant of what greatness is promised thee. Lay it to thy heart, and farewell."

Glamis thou art, and Cawdor, and *shalt be*[2]
What thou art promised: yet do I fear thy nature;
It is too full o' *the milk of human kindness*[3]
To catch the nearest way. Thou wouldst be great;
Art not without ambition: but without
The *illness*[4] should attend it: what thou wouldst highly,
That wouldst thou holily; wouldst not play false
And yet wouldst wrongly win; thou'ldst have, great Glamis,
That which cries 'Thus thou must do, if thou have it;'*
And that which rather thou dost fear to do
Than wishest should be *undone*.[5] *Hie thee*[6] hither,
That I may pour my spirits in thine ear;
And chastise with the valour of my tongue
All that impedes thee from the *golden round*,[7]† Which fate and *metaphysical*[8] aid *doth seem*
To have thee crown'd withal.[9]

Enter a Messenger.

What is your tidings?

Att. The king comes here to-night.

Lady M. Thou'rt mad to say it:
Is not thy master with him? who, were 't so,
Would have inform'd *for*[10] preparation.

[1] *right to share in my joy*

[2] *mark the note of determination*

[3] *mildness, gentleness*

[4] *disposition to wickedness which*

[5] *not done*

[6] *hasten*

[7] *crown*

[8] *supernatural*

[9] *is seen to have crowned thee with*

[10] *for the purpose of*

*In short: "The only way to obtain what thou wishest to possess, (the crown) is by murdering Duncan; but whilst thou wishest the end, thou dost fear to use those means by which alone that end could be attained."

†*I.e.* by brave words of encouragement drive away all the scruples which stand in the way of your obtaining the crown.

Att. So please you, it is true: our thane is coming:
One of my *fellows*[1] had the *speed of*[2] him,
Who, almost dead *for*[3] breath, had scarcely more
Than would make up his message.
Lady M. *Give him tending;*[4]
He brings great news. [*Exit Messenger.*]
The raven[5] himself is hoarse
That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan
Under my battlements. Come, you spirits
That tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here,
And fill me, from the crown to the toe, top-full
Of direst cruelty! make thick my blood;
Stop up the access and passage to *remorse*,[6]
That no compunctious visitings of nature
Shake my *fell*[7] purpose, nor keep peace between
The effect and it!* Come to my woman's breasts,
And *take* my milk *for*[8] gall, you *murdering ministers*,[9]
Wherever in your *sightless substances*[10]
You wait on *nature's mischief!*[11] Come, thick night,
And *pall thee in the dunnest*[12] smoke of hell,
That my keen knife see not the wound it makes,
Nor *heaven*[13] peep through the *blanket*[14] of the dark
To cry, "Hold, hold!"

Enter Macbeth.

Great Glamis! worthy Cawdor!
Greater than both, by the all-hail hereafter!
Thy letters have transported me beyond
This ignorant present,† and I feel now

[1] *companions*
[2] *start of*
[3] *for want of*
[4] *attend to him*
[5] i.e. *the messenger*
[6] *pity*
[7] *horrible*
[8] *change into*
[9] *ministers of murder*
[10] *invisible forms*
[11] *the destruction of life; "nature" = human life*
[12] *put on a cloak of the darkest*
[13] *light*
[14] i.e. *the dark "pall" of l. 53*

*Let no tender feeling gain entrance to or even approach my heart, lest my hideous purpose be shaken by the natural pangs of conscience, and its realization be thereby prevented. "Keep peace," *i.e.* as if pity ("remorse") were to cry "hold!" or "stop!" Cf. line 56.

†*I.e* have enabled me to see into the future. The "present" is said to be "ignorant," because it sees not the future.

The future in the instant.
Macb. My dearest love,
Duncan comes here to-night.
Lady M. And when goes hence?
Macb. To-morrow, as he purposes.
Lady M. O, never
Shall sun that morrow see!
Your face, my thane, is as a book where men
May read strange matters. *To beguile the time,*
Look like the time;[1] bear welcome in your eye,
Your hand, your tongue: look like the innocent flower,
But be the serpent under 't. *He*[2] that 's coming
Must be *provided for:*[3] and you shall put
This night's great business into my *dispatch;*[4]
Which shall to all our nights and days to come
Give *solely sovereign sway*[5] and masterdom.
Macb. We will speak further.
Lady M. Only look up clear;
To *alter favour*[6] ever is to *fear:*[7]
Leave all the rest to me. [*Exeunt.*

[1] *to deceive the world look as the world looks*
[2] i.e. *Duncan*
[3] *murdered*
[4] *management*
[5] *to us alone imperial power*
[6] *change countenance*
[7] *show fear*

SCENE VI. *The same. Before the Castle.*

Hautboys[8] *and torches. Enter* DUNCAN, MALCOLM, DONALBAIN, BANQUO, LENNOX, MACDUFF, ROSS, ANGUS, *and Attendants.*

Dun. This castle hath a pleasant *seat;*[9] the air
Nimbly[10] and sweetly recommends itself
Unto our gentle senses.*
Ban. This guest of summer,
The temple-haunting *martlet,*[11] does *approve*[12]
By *his loved mansionry*[13] that the heaven's breath
Smells *wooingly*[14] here: *no jutty,*[15] frieze,
Buttress, nor *coign of vantage,*[16] but this bird

[8] *a kind of musical wind instrument like a flute*
[9] *situation*
[10] *briskly*
[11] *a kind of swallow*
[12] *prove, attest*
[13] *making this a favorite place of abode; mansionry = abode*
[14] *invitingly*
[15] *there is no ledge*
[16] *suitable corner*

*"Our senses are soothed by the brisk, sweet air."—Clarendon Press Edition.

Hath made his *pendent bed and procreant cradle:*[1]
Where they most breed and haunt, I have observed
The air is delicate.

Enter LADY MACBETH.

Dun. See, see, our honour'd hostess!
The love that follows us sometime is our trouble,[2]*
Which still we thank as love. *Herein*[3] I teach you
How you shall bid God *'ild*[4] us for your pains
And thank us for your trouble.
Lady M. All our service
In every point twice done, and then done double,
Were poor and *single business to contend*
Against[5] those honours deep and broad wherewith
Your majesty loads our house: for those of old,
And the *late dignities*[6] heap'd up to them,
We rest your *hermits.*[7]
Dun. Where's the thane of Cawdor?
We *coursed him*[8] at the heels, and had a purpose
To *be his purveyor:*[9] but he rides well;
And his great love, sharp as his spur, hath *holp*[10] him
To his home before us. Fair and noble hostess,
We are your guest to-night.
Lady M. Your servants ever
Have theirs, themselves, and what is theirs, *in compt,*[11]
To *make their audit*[12] at your highness' pleasure,
Still to return your own.
Dun. Give me your hand;
Conduct me to mine host: we love him highly,
And shall continue our graces towards him.
By your leave, hostess.[13] [*Exeunt.*

[1] *hanging nest and cradle of his family*

[2] *a cause of trouble to us*
[3] *by my example*
[4] *for "yield" in its old sense "reward"*

[5] *a simple (trivial) thing compared with*
[6] *recent honors*
[7] *beadsmen*, i.e. *bound to pray for you*
[8] *pursued him hotly*
[9] *warn you of his coming.* See Glossary
[10] *helped*

[11] *accountable*
[12] *furnish a reckoning*

[13] *he takes Lady Macbeth's hand*

*The meaning of this and the following lines appears to be: "Your love for us gives us pain on account of its insistence; nevertheless we thank it because it is love. So, my example will teach you to bid God reward us for the trouble we give you ("your pains") and to thank us for causing you that trouble (because the fact of our doing so is a sign of our love for you)."

SCENE VII. MACBETH'S *Castle.*

Hautboys and torches. Enter, and pass over the stage, a Sewer,[1] *and Divers Servants with dishes and service. Then enter* MACBETH.

Macb. If it were *done*[2] when 'tis *done*,[3]* then 'twere well
It were done quickly: if the assassination
Could *trammel up*[4] the consequence, and catch
With *his surcease*[5] success; *that but this blow*[6]
Might be the be-all and the end-all here,
But here, upon this bank and shoal of time,†
We'ld *jump*[7] the life to come. But in these cases
We still have judgment here; *that*[8] we but teach
Bloody instructions,[9] which being taught return
To plague the inventor: this even-handed justice
Commends the ingredients[10] of our poison'd *chalice*[11]
To our own lips. He's here in double trust;‡
First, as I am his kinsman and his subject,
Strong both[12] against the deed; then, as his host,
Who should against his murderer shut the door,
Not bear the knife myself. Besides, this Duncan
Hath *borne his faculties so meek*,[13] hath been
So *clear*[14] in his great office, that his virtues
Will plead like angels trumpet-tongued against
The *deep damnation*[15] of his taking off;
And pity, like a naked new-born babe,
Striding the blast,[16] or heaven's cherubim, horsed
Upon the *sightless couriers*[17] of the air,
Shall blow the horrid deed in every eye,
That[18] tears shall drown the wind. I have no spur

[1] *chief servant.* See Glossary
[2] *finished with*
[3] *executed, performed*
[4] *arrest, or entangle, within its net.*
[5] *Duncan's death*
[6] *so that this single act (of assassination)*
[7] *risk, take our chance of*
[8] *so that*
[9] *how to commit murder*
[10] *presents the contents*
[11] *cup*
[12] *two strong reasons*
[13] *exercised his powers so meekly*
[14] *irreproachable*
[15] *terrible sin*
[16] *riding upon the tempest*
[17] *invisible winds*
[18] *so that*

*See p. 177 on which this passage is paraphrased.

†A metaphor, in which death is regarded as a strip of land separating two oceans; *i.e.* separating this present life from the life to come.

‡*I.e.* I am doubly bound in honor to care for his safety under my roof.

To prod the sides of my *intent*,[1] but only
Vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself,
And falls on the *other*.[2]

Enter Lady Macbeth.

How now? what news?

Lady M. He has almost supp'd. Why have you left the chamber?

Macb. Hath he ask'd for me?

Lady M. Know you not he has?

Macb. We will proceed no further in this business:
He hath honour'd me of late; and I have *bought*[3]
Golden opinions from all sorts of people,
Which *would*[4] be worn now in their newest gloss,
Not cast aside so soon.

Lady M. Was the hope drunk
Wherein you dress'd yourself? hath it slept since?
And wakes it now, to look so green and *pale*[5]
At what it did so freely? From this time,
Such I account thy love. Art thou afeard
To be the same in thine own act and valour
As thou art[6] in desire? Wouldst thou have that
Which thou esteem'st *the ornament of life*,[7]
And live a coward in thine own esteem,
Letting "I dare not" wait upon "I would,"*
Like the poor cat† i' the *adage*?[8]

Macb. Prithee, peace:
I dare do all that may become a man;
Who dares do more, is none.

Lady M. What beast was 't then,
That made you *break*[9] this enterprise to me?
When you durst do it, then you were a man;
And, *to be*[10] more than what you were, you would
Be so much more the man. Nor time nor place
Did then adhere,[11] and yet you would make *both*:[12]
They have made themselves, and *that their*[13] fitness now
Does unmake you.

[1] *purpose*

[2] sc. *side. Note the two metaphors from spurring a horse and vaulting over the saddle*

[3] *acquired*

[4] *should*

[5] i.e. *with fear*

[6] *to let your deed and bravery correspond with what you desire*

[7] i.e. *the crown*

[8] *proverb*

[9] *disclose*

[10] *in being*

[11] *were then favorable*

[12] i.e. *favorable*

[13] *their very*

*Letting your fears accompany your desires.

†"The cat would eat fish and would not wet her feet."—Heywood's *Proverbs*.

Macb. If we should fail?
Lady M. We fail!
But screw your courage to the *sticking-place*,[1]
And we'll not fail. When Duncan is asleep—
Whereto the rather shall his day's hard journey
Soundly invite him—his two *chamberlains*[2]
Will I with wine and *wassail*[3] so *convince*,[4]
That memory, the *warder*[5] of the brain,
Shall *be a fume*,[6] and the *receipt*[7] of reason
A *limbec*[8] only: when in swinish sleep
Their drenchéd natures lie as in a death,
What cannot you and I perform upon
The unguarded Duncan? what not put upon
His *spongy*[9] officers, who shall bear the guilt
Of our great *quell*?[10]
Macb. Will it not be *received*,[11]
When we have mark'd with blood those sleepy two
Of his own chamber, and used their very daggers,
That they have done 't?
Lady M. Who dares receive it other,
As we shall make our griefs and clamour roar
Upon his death?
Macb. I am settled, and *bend up*
Each corporal agent[12] to this terrible feat.
Away, and *mock the time*[13] with fairest show:
False face must hide what the false heart doth know. [*Exeunt.*

[1] *point at which it will remain unmoved*
[2] *officers of his chamber*
[3] *carousing*
[4] *overpower*
[5] *guardian*
[6] *become fogged*
[7] *receptacle*
[8] *reservoir.* See Glossary
[9] i.e. *saturated with drink*
[10] *murder.* See Glossary
[11] *generally thought*
[12] *strain every organ of my body*
[13] *delude the world.* Cf. I. v. 65

ACT II.

SCENE I. *Inverness. Court of* MACBETH'S *Castle.*

Enter BANQUO, *and* FLEANCE *bearing a torch.*

Ban. How goes the night, boy?
Fle. The moon is down; I have not heard the clock.
Ban. And she goes down at twelve.
Fle. I take 't, 'tis later, sir.
Ban. Hold, take my sword. There's *husbandry*[1] in heaven;
Their candles are all out. Take thee *that*[2] too.
A heavy summons lies like lead upon me,
And yet I would not sleep: merciful powers,
Restrain in me the curséd thoughts that nature
Gives way to in repose!—Give me my sword.
Who's there?

Enter MACBETH, *and a Servant with a torch.*

Macb. A friend.
Ban. What, sir, not yet at rest? The king's a-bed:
He hath been in unusual pleasure, and
Sent forth great *largess*[3] to your *offices.*[4]
This diamond he greets your wife withal,
By the name of most kind hostess; and *shut up*[5]
In measureless content.
Macb. Being unprepared,
Our will became the servant to defect;*
Which *else should free have wrought.*[6]
Ban. All's well.
I dreamt last night of the three weird sisters:
To you they have show'd some truth.

[1] *economy*
[2] *a shield or a helmet*
[3] *presents*
[4] *servants*
[5] *has retired. Sc. is*
[6] *otherwise would have had free play*

*Our good will has been limited by, or subject to, our deficiencies.

Macb. I think not of them:
Yet, when we can entreat an hour to serve,
We would spend it in some words upon that business,
If you would grant the time.
Ban. At your kind'st leisure.
Macb. If you shall *cleave to my consent, when 'tis,*[1]
It shall make honour for you.
Ban. *So*[2] I lose none
In seeking to augment it, but still keep
My bosom franchised and allegiance clear,*
I shall be counsell'd.
Macb. Good repose, the while!
Ban. Thanks, sir: the like to you.
[*Exeunt* BANQUO *and* FLEANCE.
Macb. Go, bid thy mistress, when my drink is ready,
She strike upon the bell. Get thee to bed.
[*Exit Servant.*
Is this a dagger which I see before me,
The handle toward my hand? Come, let me clutch thee:
I have thee not, and yet I see thee still.
Art thou not, fatal vision, *sensible*
To feeling as to sight?[3] or art thou but
A dagger of the mind, a false creation,
Proceeding from the heat-oppressèd brain?
I see thee yet, in form as *palpable*[4]
As this which now I draw.
Thou marshall'st me the way that I was going;
And such an instrument I was to use.
Mine eyes are made the *fools*[5] o' the other senses,
Or else worth all the rest:† I see thee still;
And on thy blade and *dudgeon*[6] *gouts*[7] of blood,
Which was not so before. There's no such thing:
It is the bloody business which informs

[1] *abide by my counsel, when the time arrives*
[2] *provided that*
[3] *able to be felt as well as seen*
[4] *substantial*
[5] *laughing stock*
[6] *handle*
[7] *drops*

*My conscience free, and my loyalty (to my sovereign) irreproachable.

†*I.e.* My eyes tell me right, and my other senses (especially my sense of touch), are wrong.

Thus to mine eyes. Now o'er the one half-world
Nature seems dead, and wicked dreams *abuse*
The curtained sleep;[1] witchcraft celebrates
Pale Hecate's offerings; and *wither'd*[2] murder,
Alarum'd[3] by his sentinel, the wolf,
Whose howl's *his watch*,[4] thus with his stealthy pace,
With *Tarquin's*[5] ravishing strides, towards his design
Moves like a ghost. Thou sure and firm-set earth,
Hear not my steps, which way they walk, for fear
Thy *very stones*[6] prate of my whereabout,
And take the present horror from the time,
Which now suits with it.* Whiles I threat, he lives:
Words to the heat of deeds too cool breath gives.
[*A bell rings.*
I go, and it is done: the bell invites me.
Hear it not, Duncan; for it is a *knell*[7]
That summons thee to heaven or to hell.
[*Exit.*

[1] *tempt to evil the sleeper on his curtained bed*
[2] *spectre-like*
[3] *awakened*
[4] *tells him the progress of the night*
[5] see Note II. i. 55
[6] cf. St. Luke xix. *40*
[7] *the sound of a funeral bell*

Scene II. *The Same.*

Enter Lady Macbeth.

Lady M. That which hath made them drunk hath made me bold;
What hath *quench'd*[8] them hath given me fire.
Hark! Peace!
It was the owl that shriek'd, the fatal bellman,
Which gives the stern'st good-night. He is about it:
The doors are open, and the surfeited grooms
Do mock their charge with snores: I have drugg'd their *possets*.[9]
That[10] death and nature do contend about them,

[8] *stupefied*
[9] *evening drinks*
[10] *so that*

*And cause me to postpone the horrible deed which suits so well this time of silence.

Whether they live or die.
Macb. [*Within*] *Who's there?*[1] what, ho!
Lady M. Alack! I am afraid they have awaked,
And 'tis not done. The attempt and not the deed
Confounds us. Hark! I laid their daggers ready;
He could not miss 'em. Had he not resembled
My father as he slept, I had done 't. My husband!

ENTER MACBETH.

Macb. I have done the deed. Didst thou not hear a noise?
Lady M. I heard the owl scream and the crickets cry.
Did not you speak?
Macb. When?
Lady. M. Now.
Macb. As I descended?
Lady M. Ay.
Macb. Hark!
Who lies i' the second chamber?
Lady M. Donalbain.
Macb. This is a sorry sight. [*Looking on his hands.*
Lady M. A foolish thought, to say a sorry sight.
Macb. There 's *one*[2] did laugh in 's sleep, and one cried, "Murder!"
That[3] they did wake each other: I stood and heard them;
But they did say their prayers, and *address'd them*[4]
Again to sleep.
Lady M. There are two lodged together.
Macb. One cried, "God bless us!" and, "Amen," the other;
As[5] they had seen me with these hangman's hands:

[1] *Macbeth hears the sound referred to in lines 2 and 3*
[2] *one who*
[3] *so that*
[4] *composed themselves*
[5] *as if*

Listening their fear, I could not say "Amen,"
When they did say "God bless us!"
Lady M. Consider it not so deeply.
Macb. But wherefore could not I pronounce
"Amen?"
I had most need of blessing, and "Amen"
Stuck in my throat.
Lady M. These deeds must not be thought
After these ways; so, it will make us mad.
Macb. Methought I heard a voice cry, "Sleep no more!
Macbeth does murder sleep," the innocent sleep,
Sleep, that knits up* the *ravell'd sleave*[1] of care,
The death of each day's life, sore labour's bath,
Balm of hurt minds, great *nature's second course*,[2]
Chief nourisher in life's feast,—
Lady M. What do you mean?
Macb. Still it cried, "Sleep no more!" to all the house:
"Glamis hath murder'd sleep, and therefore Cawdor
Shall sleep no more; Macbeth shall sleep no more."
Lady M. Who was it that thus cried? Why, worthy thane,
You do unbend your noble strength, to think
So *brainsickly*[3] of things. Go, get some water,
And wash this filthy *witness*[4] from your hand.
Why did you bring these daggers from the place?
They must lie there: go carry them, and smear
The sleepy grooms with blood.
Macb. I'll go no more:
I am afraid to think what I have done;
Look on 't again I dare not.
Lady M. Infirm of purpose!
Give me the daggers: the sleeping and the dead
Are but as pictures; 'tis the eye of childhood

[1] *tangled sleave-silk*

[2] *the second course in nature's daily banquet*

[3] *madly*

[4] i.e. *the stains of blood*

*The cares of the day disorder and entangle the tired mind (ravell'd sleave or skein of floss silk), which under the influence of sleep is again rested and restored to order.

That fears a painted devil. If he do bleed,
I'll *gild*[1] the faces of the grooms withal;
For it must seem their guilt.
[*Exit. Knocking within.*
Macb. Whence is that knocking?
How is 't with me, when every noise appals me?
What hands are here? ha! they pluck out mine eyes.
Will all great *Neptune's*[2] ocean wash this blood
Clean from my hand? No; this my hand will rather
The *multitudinous seas incarnardine*,[3]
Making the green *one red*.[4]

Re-enter LADY MACBETH.

Lady M. My hands are of your colour: but I shame
To wear a heart so white. [*Knocking within.*]
I hear a knocking
At the south entry; *retire we*[5] to our chamber:
A little water clears us of this deed:
How easy is it, then! Your *constancy*
Hath left you unattended.[6] [*Knocking within.*]
Hark! more knocking.
Get on your *nightgown*,[7] lest occasion call us
And show us to be watchers. *Be not lost*[8]
So poorly in your thoughts.
Macb. To know my deed, 'twere best not know myself.* [*Knocking within.*
Wake Duncan with thy knocking! I would thou couldst! [*Exeunt.*

[1] *smear with his blood. Mark the play on words, "gild" and "guilt"*

[2] *Roman sea-god*

[3] *make red the measureless seas*

[4] *one uniform red color*

[5] *let us retire*

[6] *firmness has deserted you*

[7] *dressing-gown*

[8] *do not lose yourself*

SCENE III. *The Same.*

Enter a Porter.

[*Knocking within.*

Porter. Here's a knocking, indeed! If a man were porter of hell-gate, he should have

*In reply to Lady Macbeth's "Be not lost," etc., Macbeth says, in effect: "I would rather lose myself altogether in my thoughts than be brought back to the consciousness of what I have done."

old[1] turning the key:—[*Knocking within.*] knock, knock, knock! Who's there, i' the name of Beelzebub? Here's a farmer, that hanged himself *on*[2] the expectation of plenty: Come in time; have *napkins*[3] enow about you; here you'll sweat for 't. [*Knocking within.*] Knock, knock! Who's there, in the other devil's name? Faith, here's an *equivocator*,[4] that could swear in both the scales against either scale; who committed treason enough for God's sake, yet could not *equivocate to heaven:*[5] O! come in, equivocator. [*Knocking within.*] Knock, knock, knock! Who's there? Faith, here's an English tailor come hither, for stealing out of a French *hose:*[6] Come in, tailor; here you may *roast your goose.*[7] [*Knocking within.*] Knock, knock; Never at quiet! What are you? But this place is too cold for hell. I'll *devil-porter*[8] it no further: I had thought to have let in some of all professions, that go the *primrose*[9] way to the everlasting bonfire. [*Knocking within.*] *Anon, anon!*[10] I pray you, remember the porter. [*Opens the gate.*

[1] *an intensive particle.* Cf. the colloquial *high old time*
[2] *owing to*
[3] *handkerchiefs*
[4] perhaps = *Jesuit.* See Intro. p. 22
[5] *get to heaven by equivocation (duplicity)*
[6] *breeches*
[7] *heat your flatiron*
[8] *be the devil's porter*
[9] *bright, pleasant*
[10] *coming at once!*

Enter MACDUFF *and* LENNOX.

Macd. Was it so late, friend, ere you went to bed,
That you do lie so late?
Port. Faith, sir, we were carousing till the *second cock.*[11]
Macd. Is thy master stirring?

[11] i.e. *about 3 o'clock a.m.*

Enter MACBETH.

Our knocking has awaked him; here he comes.
Len. Good morrow, noble sir.
Macb. Good morrow, both.
Macd. Is the king stirring, worthy thane?
Macb. Not yet.
Macd. He did command me to call *timely*[12] on him;

[12] *early*

I have almost slipp'd the hour.
Macb. I'll bring you to him.
Macd. I know this is a joyful trouble to you;
But yet 'tis *one.*[1]
Macb. The labour we delight in physics pain.*
This is the door.
Macd. I'll make so bold to call,
For 'tis my *limited service.*[2] [*Exit.*
Len. Goes the king hence to-day?
Macb. He does: he did appoint so.
Len. The night has been *unruly;*[3] where we lay,
Our chimneys were blown down, and, as they say,
Lamentings heard i' the air, strange screams of death,
And prophesying with accents terrible
Of dire *combustion*[4] and confused events
New hatch'd[5] to the woeful time.† *The obscure bird*[6]
Clamour'd the livelong night: some say, the earth
Was *feverous,*[7] and did shake.
Macb. 'Twas a rough night.
Len. My young remembrance cannot parallel
A fellow to it.

Re-enter MACDUFF.

Macd. O horror, horror, horror! Tongue, *nor*[8] heart
Can*not*[8] conceive nor name thee!
Macb., Len. What's the matter?
Macd. *Confusion*[9] now hath made his masterpiece!
Most sacrilegious murder hath *broke ope*[10]
The Lord's anointed temple,‡ and *stole*[11] thence

[1] i.e. *a trouble*
[2] *appointed duty*
[3] *boisterous*
[4] *conflagration, social disturbances*
[5] *newly born*
[6] *the owl*
[7] *affected with fever or an ague*
[8] double negative
[9] *destruction, ruin.* Cf. III. v. 29.
[10] *broken into*
[11] *stolen*

I.e. When our labor is pleasant there is in it that (*viz.* the delight) which counteracts the trouble.

†*I.e.* A new brood of horrors befitting the dreadful weather.

‡The king is "the Lord's anointed temple of the living God."

The life o' the building.
Macb. What is 't you say? the life?
Len. Mean you his majesty?
Macd. Approach the chamber, and destroy
your sight
With a new Gorgon: do not bid me speak:
See, and then speak yourselves.
[*Exeunt* Macbeth *and* Lennox.
Awake, awake!
Ring the alarum-bell. Murder, and treason!
Banquo and Donalbain! Malcolm! awake!
Shake off this *downy*[1] sleep, death's *counterfeit*,[2]
And look on death itself! up, up, and see
The *great doom's image!*[3] Malcolm! Banquo!
As from your graves rise up, and walk like
sprites,
To *countenance*[4] this horror! Ring the bell.
[*Bell rings.*

[1] *soft, placid*
[2] *image*
[3] *a picture of the last judgment*
[4] *be in keeping with*

Enter Lady Macbeth.

Lady M. What's the business,
That such a hideous trumpet calls to *parley*[5]
The sleepers of the house? speak, speak!
Macd O gentle lady,
'Tis not for you to hear what I can speak:
The repetition,[6] in a woman's ear,
Would murder as it fell.

[5] *conference*
[6] *to tell it*

Enter Banquo.

O Banquo, Banquo,
Our royal master 's murdered!
Lady M. Woe, alas!
What, in our house?
Ban. Too cruel anywhere.
Dear Duff, I prithee, contradict thyself,
And say, it is not so.

Re-enter Macbeth *and* Lennox.

Macb. Had I but died an hour before this
chance,[7]

[7] *event*

I had lived a blesséd time: for, from this instant
There's nothing *serious*[1] in mortality:
All is but *toys*:[2] renown and grace *is*[3] dead;
The wine of life is drawn, and the mere lees
Is left this *vault*[4] to brag of.

Enter MALCOLM *and* DONALBAIN.

Don. What is amiss?
Macb. *You are*,[5] and do not know 't:
The spring, the head, the fountain of your blood
Is stopp'd; the very source of it is stopp'd.
Macd. Your royal father 's murdered.
Mal. O, by whom?
Len. Those of his chamber, as it seem'd, had done 't:
Their hands and faces were all badged with blood;
So were their daggers, which unwiped we found upon their pillows:
They *stared*,[6] and were distracted; no man's life
Was to be trusted with them.
Macb. O, yet I do repent me of my fury,
That I did kill them.
Macd. Wherefore did you so?
Macb. Who can be wise, *amazed*,[7] temperate and furious,
Loyal and neutral,* in a moment? No man:
The *expedition*[8] of my violent love
Outrun the pauser reason. Here lay Duncan,
His silver skin *laced*[9] with his golden blood,
And his *gash'd stabs*[10] look'd like a breach in nature
For ruin's wasteful entrance:† there, the murderers,
Steep'd in the colours of their trade, their daggers
Unmannerly breech'd[11] with gore: who could refrain,

[1] *important, weighty;* i.e. *there's nothing worth living for*
[2] *trifles*
[3] *are.* See Grammatical notes, p. 168
[4] *world*
[5] i.e. *you are amiss*
[6] *glared*
[7] *confused*
[8] *impetuosity*
[9] *streaked*
[10] *gaping wounds*
[11] *indecently clothed*

*Loyal, as a subject of the king's; neutral, as a judge.

†An opening through which death had entered and performed his work of destruction.

That had a heart to love, and in that heart
Courage to make 's love known?
Lady M. *Help me hence,*[1] ho!
Macd. Look to the lady.
Mal. [*Aside to* Don.] Why do we hold our tongues
That most may claim this *argument*[2] for ours?
Don. [*Aside to* Mal.] What should be spoken
Here, where our *Fate,*[3] *hid in an auger-hole,*[4]
May rush, and seize us? Let's away: our tears
Are not yet brew'd.*
Mal. [*Aside to* Don.] Nor our strong sorrow
Upon the foot of motion.[5]
Ban. Look to the lady:
[Lady Macbeth *is carried out.*
And when we have our *naked frailties*[6] hid,
That suffer in exposure, let us meet,
And *question*[7] this most bloody piece of work,
To know it further. Fears and *scruples*[8] shake us:
In the great hand of God I stand, and thence,
Against the *undivulged pretence*[9] I fight
Of treasonous malice.
Macd. And so do I.
All. So all.
Macd. Let's briefly *put on manly readiness,*[10]
And meet i' the hall together.
All. Well contented.
[*Exeunt all but* Malcolm *and* Donalbain.
Mal. What will you do? Let's not consort with them:
To show an unfelt sorrow is an office
Which the false man does easy. I'll to England.
Don. To Ireland, I; our separated fortune
Shall keep us both the safer; where we are,

[1] *she faints*
[2] *subject, theme*
[3] i.e. *death*
[4] *ambushed in some secret spot*
[5] *ready to move in action*
[6] *scantily clad bodies*
[7] *discuss*
[8] *doubts*
[9] *secret purposes*
[10] *equip ourselves and prepare for action*

*These words suggest a contrast to the artificial and strained grief of Macbeth.

There's daggers in men's smiles: the near in blood
The nearer bloody.*

Mal. This murderous shaft that's shot
Hath not yet *lighted,*[1] and our safest way
Is to avoid the aim. Therefore, to horse;
And let us not be *dainty of*[2] leave-taking,
But shift away: there's *warrant in*[3] that theft
Which steals itself when there 's no mercy left.
[*Exeunt.*

[1] *reached its mark*
[2] *scrupulous about*
[3] *excuse, or justification for*

SCENE IV. *Outside* MACBETH'S *Castle.*

Enter ROSS *and an Old Man.*

Old M. Threescore and ten I can remember well:
Within the *volume*[4] of which time I have seen
Hours dreadful and things strange; but this *sore*[5] night
Hath *trifled*[6] former knowings.

Ross. Ah, good father,
Thou seest, the heavens, *as*[7] troubled with man's act,
Threaten his bloody *stage:*[8] by the clock 'tis day,
And yet dark night strangles the *travelling lamp:*[9]
Is 't night's predominance, or the day's shame,
That darkness does the face of earth entomb,
When living light should kiss it?†

Old M. 'Tis unnatural,
Even like the deed that's done. On Tuesday last,
A falcon, *towering*[10] in her *pride of place,*[11]
Was by a *mousing*[12] owl *hawk'd at*[13] and kill'd.

Ross. And Duncan's horses—a thing most strange and certain—

[4] *course*
[5] *dreadful*
[6] *made as trifles in comparison*
[7] *as if*
[8] *the world*
[9] i.e. *the sun*
[10] *circling aloft*
[11] *the highest point to which she soars*
[12] *mouse-hunting*
[13] *attacked on the wing*

*The nearer any man (*e.g.* Macbeth) is in relationship to us, the more prone he will be to commit murder.

†Is it that night's (harmful) influence prevails triumphantly over the daylight, or is it because the day is ashamed to show her light (when such deeds of darkness are being done) that darkness still casts its black shroud over the surface of the earth, at an hour when cheering light should salute it?

Beauteous and swift, the *minions*[1] of their race,
Turn'd wild in nature, broke their stalls, flung out,
Contending 'gainst obedience, *as*[2] they would make
War with mankind.
Old M. 'Tis said, they eat each other.
Ross. They did so, to the amazement of mine eyes,
That look'd upon 't. Here comes the good Macduff.

[1] *most esteemed*
[2] *as if*

Enter Macduff.

How goes the world, sir, now?
Macd. Why, see you not?
Ross. Is 't known who did this more than bloody deed?
Macd. Those that Macbeth hath slain.
Ross. Alas, the day!
What good could they *pretend?*[3]
Macd. They were *suborn'd.*[4]
Malcolm, and Donalbain, the king's two sons,
Are stol'n away and fled, which puts upon them
Suspicion of the deed
Ross. *'Gainst nature still:*[5]
Thriftless ambition, that wilt *ravin up*[6]
Thine own life's means! Then 'tis most like
The sovereignty will fall upon Macbeth.
Macd. He is already named, and gone to Scone
To be invested.
Ross. Where is Duncan's body?
Macd. Carried to Colme-kill,
The sacred *storehouse*[7] of his predecessors
And guardian of their bones.
Ross. Will you to Scone?
Macd. No, cousin, I'll to Fife.
Ross. Well, I will thither.
Macd. Well, may you see things well done there: adieu!

[3] *aim at*
[4] *incited to it*
[5] cf. l. 10, p. 97
[6] *utterly devour*
[7] *tomb*

Lest our old robes sit easier than our new!
Ross. Farewell, father.
Old M. God's *benison*[1] go with you; and with those
That would make good of bad, and friends of foes!

[*Exeunt.*

[1] *blessing*

ACT III.

Scene I. *Forres. The Palace. Enter* Banquo.

Ban. Thou hast it now: king, Cawdor, Glamis, all,
As the weird women promised; and I fear,
Thou play'dst most foully for 't; yet it was said
It should not *stand*[1] in thy posterity,
But that myself should be the root and father
Of many kings. If there come truth from them—
As upon thee, Macbeth, their speeches *shine*[2]—
Why, by the *verities*[3] on thee made good,
May they not *be my oracles*[4] as well,
And set me up in hope? But, hush! no more.

Sennet[5] *sounded. Enter* Macbeth, *as king;* Lady Macbeth, *as queen;* Lennox, Ross, *Lords, Ladies, and Attendants.*

Macb. Here's our chief guest.
Lady M. If he had been forgotten,
It had been as a gap in our great feast,
And *all-thing*[6] unbecoming.
Macb. To-night we hold a *solemn*[7] supper, sir,
And I'll request your presence.
Ban. Let your highness
Command upon me; to the which my duties
Are with a most indissoluble tie
For ever knit.
Macb. Ride you this afternoon?
Ban. Ay, my good lord.
Macb. We should have else desired your good advice,
Which still hath been both *grave and prosperous*,[8]
In this day's council; but we'll take to-morrow.
Is 't far you ride?
Ban. As far, my lord, as will fill up the time

[1] *remain, continue*
[2] i.e. *with the brightness of truth*
[3] *truths*
[4] *interpret heaven's will for me*
[5] *flourish of trumpets*
[6] *altogether*
[7] *ceremonious*
[8] *weighty and happy, or leading to good issues*

'Twixt this and supper: go not my horse *the better*,[1]
I must become a borrower of the night
For a dark hour or twain.
Macb. Fail not our feast.
Ban. My lord, I will not.
Macb. We hear our *bloody*[2] cousins *are bestow'd*[3]
In England and in Ireland, not confessing
Their cruel parricide, filling their hearers
With strange invention: but of that to-morrow,
When therewithal we shall have *cause of state*[4]
Craving us jointly. Hie you to horse: adieu,
Till you return at night. Goes Fleance with you?
Ban. Ay, my good lord: our time does call upon 's.
Macb. I wish your horses swift and sure of foot;
And so I do commend you to their backs.
Farewell. [*Exit* BANQUO.
Let every man be master of his time
Till seven at night: to make society
The sweeter welcome, we will keep ourself
Till supper time alone: *while*[5] then, God be with you!
[*Exeunt all but* MACBETH *and an Attendant.*
Sirrah,[6] a word with you: Attend those men
Our pleasure?
Atten. They are, my lord, without the palace gate.
Macb. Bring them before us. [*Exit Attendant.*
To be *thus*[7] is nothing;
But to be safely thus.[8] Our fears in Banquo
Stick deep; and in his royalty of nature
Reigns that which *would*[9] be fear'd: 'tis much he dares,
And, to that dauntless temper of his mind,
He hath a *wisdom*[10] that doth guide his valour
To act in safety. There is none but he
Whose *being*[11] I do fear: and under him

[1] *better than usual*
[2] *murderous*
[3] *have established themselves*
[4] *state affairs*
[5] *till*
[6] see Glossary
[7] i.e. *crowned*
[8] sc. *something like: "that's the thing"*
[9] *requires to*
[10] *prudence*
[11] *existence*

My Genius[1] is rebuked, as, it is said,
Mark Antony's was by Cæsar. He chid the sisters,
When first they put the name of king upon me,
And bade them speak to him: then, *prophet-like*,[2]
They hail'd him father to a line of kings:
Upon my head they placed a fruitless crown,
And put a barren sceptre in my *gripe*,[3]
Thence to be wrench'd with an *unlineal*[4] hand,
No son of mine succeeding. If 't be so,
For Banquo's issue have I *filed*[5] my mind;
For them the gracious Duncan have I murder'd;
Put rancours[6] in the vessel of my peace,*
Only for them; and mine *eternal jewel*[7]
Given to the common enemy of man,
To make them kings, the seed of Banquo kings:
Rather than so, come, fate, into the list,
And *champion me to the utterance!*[8] Who 's there?

Re-enter Attendant with two Murderers.

Now, go to the door, and stay there till we call.

[*Exit Attendant.*

Was it not yesterday we spoke together?

1 Mur. It was, so please your highness.

Macb. Well, then, now
Have you consider'd of my speeches? Know,
That it was he, in the times past, *which*[9] held you
So under fortune, *which*[9] you thought had been
Our innocent self. This I *made good*[10] to you
In our last conference; *pass'd in probation with*[11] you
How you were *borne in hand*,[12] how *cross'd*,[13] the instruments,
Who wrought with them, and all things else, that might
To half a soul and to a notion crazed
Say, "Thus did Banquo."

1 Mur. You made it known to us.

[1] *my demon, my conscience*
[2] *spoken contemptuously*
[3] *grasp*
[4] *not hereditary*
[5] *defiled, tainted*
[6] *malice, hatred*
[7] *immortal soul*
[8] *challenge me to fight to the death*
[9] *who*
[10] *plainly showed*
[11] *proved clearly to*
[12] *as we say "taken in"*
[13] *thwarted*

*"Made myself live at discord with myself."—Schmidt. (Schmidt, Heinrich Julian, born at Marienwerder, Prussia, 1818; died, 1886. A German literary historian and journalist).

Macb. I did so, and went further, *which*[1] is now
Our point of second meeting. Do you find
Your patience so predominant in your nature,
That you can let this go? *Are you so gospell'd*
To[2] pray for this *good*[3] man and for his issue,
Whose heavy hand hath bow'd you to the grave
And beggar'd yours for ever?
1 Mur. We are *men*,[4] my liege.
Macb. Ay, in the *catalogue*[5] ye go for men;
As hounds, and greyhounds, mongrels, spaniels, curs,
Shoughs, water-rugs, and demi-wolves,* are *clept*[6]
All by the name of dogs: the *valued file*[7]
Distinguishes the swift, the slow, the subtle,
The *housekeeper*,[8] the hunter, every one
According to the gift which bounteous nature
Hath in him *closed*,[9] whereby he does receive
Particular *addition*,[10] from the *bill*[11]
That writes them all alike: and so of men.
Now, if you have *a station*[12] in the file,
Not i' the worst *rank*[13] of manhood, say 't;
And I will put that business in your *bosoms*[14]
Whose execution takes your enemy off,
Grapples you to the heart and love of us,
Who wear our health but sickly in his life,†
Which *in*[15] his death were perfect.
2 Mur. I am one, my liege,
Whom the vile blows and buffets of the world
Have so incensed, that I am reckless what
I do to spite the world.
1 Mur. And I another,
So weary with disasters, tugg'd with fortune,
That I would set my life on any chance,
To mend it or be rid on 't.
Macb. Both of you

[1] *and this—the other topic*
[2] *do you so act up to the precepts of the gospel as to*
[3] *spoken ironically*
[4] *human*
[5] *general list;* i.e. *in common parlance*
[6] *called*
[7] *list, showing values or prices*
[8] *watch-dog*
[9] *enclosed, included*
[10] *title*
[11] i.e. *the general catalogue*
[12] *any position*
[13] *grade*
[14] *power*
[15] *on*, or *with*

*A shough (pronounced shook) is a dog with long hair or shag; a water-rug is a rough-haired poodle; a demi-wolf is a cross between a dog and a wolf.

†*I.e.* Whose health is imperfect, or threatened, as long as he lives.

Know Banquo was your enemy.
2 Mur. True, my lord.
Macb. So is he mine; and *in such bloody distance,*[1]
That every minute of his *being*[2] *thrusts*
Against my near'st of life:[3] and though I could
With barefaced power sweep him from my sight,
And bid my will avouch it,* yet I must not—
For[4] certain friends that are both his and mine,
Whose loves I may not drop—but *wail*[5] his fall
Who[6] I myself struck down: and thence it is,
That I to your assistance do make love,
Masking the business from the common eye
For sundry weighty reasons.
2 Mur. We shall, my lord,
Perform what you command us.
1 Mur. Though our lives—
Macb. Your *spirits*[7] shine through you.
Within this hour at most,
I will advise you where to plant yourselves,
Acquaint you with the perfect spy o' the time,†
The moment on 't; for 't must be done to-night,
And *something*[8] from the palace; *always thought*[9]
That I require a *clearness:*[10] and with him,—
To leave no *rubs nor botches*[11] in the work—
Fleance his son, that keeps him company,
Whose absence is no less *material*[12] to me
Than is his father's, must embrace the fate
Of that dark hour. *Resolve yourselves*[13] apart;
I'll come to you anon.
2 Mur. We are *resolved,*[14] my lord.
Macb. I'll call upon you straight: abide within.
[*Exeunt Murderers.*
It is concluded: Banquo, thy soul's flight,
If it find heaven, must find it out to-night. [*Exit.*

[1] *is such a dangerous enemy*
[2] *existence*
[3] *is as a violent attack on my vital parts*
[4] *on account of*
[5] *I must bewail*
[6] *whom*
[7] *courage*
[8] *some distance*
[9] *it being always remembered*
[10] i.e. *from suspicion*
[11] *imperfections nor bungling*
[12] *important*
[13] *come to a definite decision*
[14] *determined*

*Make my will my (sufficient) reason or justification for it.

†Tell you exactly all the circumstances so far as observation can gain a knowledge of them.

SCENE II. *The same. Another Room.*

Enter LADY MACBETH *and a Servant.*

Lady M. Is Banquo gone from court?
Serv. Ay, madam, but returns again to-night.
Lady M. Say to the king, I would attend his leisure
For a few words.
Serv. Madam, I will. [*Exit.*
Lady M. Naught's had, all's spent.
Where our desire is got without *content:*[1]
'Tis safer to be that which we destroy
Than by destruction dwell in doubtful joy.

Enter MACBETH.

How now, my lord? why do you keep alone,
Of *sorriest*[2] fancies your companions making;
Using those thoughts which should indeed have died
With them they think on? Things without all remedy
Should be without regard:[3] what 's done, is done.
Macb. We have *scotch'd*[4] the snake, not kill'd it:
She'll *close*[5] and be herself, whilst our *poor*[6] malice
Remains in danger of her former tooth.
But let the *frame of things disjoint,*[7] both the worlds suffer,
Ere we will eat our meal in fear, and sleep
In the affliction of these terrible dreams
That shake us nightly; better be with the dead,
Whom we, to gain our peace, have sent to peace,
Than *on the torture of the mind*[8] to lie
In *restless ecstasy.*[9] Duncan is in his grave;
After life's *fitful fever*[10] he sleeps well;
Treason has done his worst: nor steel, nor poison,
Malice domestic,[11] foreign *levy,*[12] nothing
Can touch him further.
Lady M. Come on;

[1] *contentment, peace of mind*
[2] *saddest*
[3] *should not be regarded or thought of*
[4] *slightly wounded*
[5] *heal up*
[6] *feeble, useless*
[7] *fabric of the world fall to pieces*
[8] *with our minds upon the rack*
[9] *unceasing agony*
[10] *feverish agitation*
[11] i.e. *treason at home*
[12] *forces*

Gentle, my lord, *sleek o'er*[1] your rugged looks;
Be bright and jovial among your guests to-night.
Macb. So shall I, love; and so, I pray, be you:
Let your *remembrance*[2] apply to Banquo;
Present him eminence,* both with eye and tongue:
Unsafe[3] the while that we
Must lave our honours in these flattering streams,†
And make our faces *visards to*[4] our hearts,
Disguising what they are.
Lady M. You must leave this.
Macb. O, full of scorpions is my mind, dear wife!
Thou know'st that Banquo, and his Fleance, lives.
Lady M. But *in them nature's copy 's not eterne.*[5]
Macb. There 's comfort yet; they are assailable;
Then be thou jocund: ere the bat hath flown
His cloister'd flight, ere to black Hecate's summons
The *shard-borne beetle*[6] with his drowsy hums
Hath rung night's yawning peal, there shall be done
A deed of dreadful note.
Lady M. What's to be done?
Macb. Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest chuck,
Till thou applaud the deed. Come, *seeling*[7] night,
Scarf up[8] the tender eye of pitiful day,
And with thy bloody and invisible hand
Cancel and tear to pieces that great *bond*[9]
Which keeps me pale! Light thickens; and the crow
Makes wing to the *rooky*[10] wood;

[1] *smooth*
[2] *courtesies*
[3] *we being unsafe*
[4] *masks to conceal*
[5] *their tenure of life is not permanent*
[6] *beetle with its scaly wings*
[7] i.e. *that closes the eyelids*
[8] *blindfold*
[9] *bond by which Banquo holds his life.* See l. 38
[10] *haunted by rooks*

*Pay court to him as a most distinguished guest.

†Keep our dignities clear from suspicion (or from the consequences which may result from suspicion) by means of flattery.

Good things of day begin to droop and drowse:
Whiles night's *black agents*[1] to their preys do *rouse.*[2]
Thou marvell'st at my words; but hold thee still:
Things bad begun make strong themselves by ill.
So, prithee, go with me. [*Exeunt.*

[1] e.g. *bats, wolves, murderers*
[2] *rise*

SCENE III. *A Park near the Palace.*

Enter three Murderers.

1 Mur. But who did bid thee join with us?
3 Mur. Macbeth.
2 Mur. *He needs not our mistrust,*[3] since he *delivers*
Our offices[4] and what we have to do
To the direction just.[5]
1 Mur. Then stand with us.
The west yet glimmers with some streaks of day:
Now spurs the *lated*[6] traveller apace
To gain the *timely*[7] inn, and near approaches
The subject of our watch.
3 Mur. Hark! I hear horses.
Ban. [*Within.*] Give us a light there, ho!
2 Mur. Then 'tis he: the rest
That are *within the note of expectation,*[8]
Already are i' the court.
1 Mur. His horses go *about.*[9]
3 Mur. Almost a mile: but he does usually,
So all men do, from hence to the palace gate
Make it their walk.

Enter BANQUO *and* FLEANCE *with a torch.*

2 Mur. A light, a light!
3 Mur. 'Tis he.
1 Mur. *Stand to 't.*[10]
Ban. It will be rain to-night.
1 Mur. Let it come down.
[*They set upon* BANQUO.
Ban. O, treachery! Fly, good Fleance, fly, fly, fly!

[3] *we need not distrust him*
[4] *reports our duties*
[5] *exactly as we were instructed*
[6] *belated*
[7] *welcome*
[8] *on the list of expected*
[9] *round*
[10] *keep firm*

Thou mayst revenge. O slave!
[*Dies.* Fleance *escapes.*
3 Mur. Who did strike out the light?
1 Mur. Was 't not the way?
3 Mur. There 's but one down; the son is fled.
2 Mur. We have lost
Best half of our affair.
1 Mur. Well, let 's away, and say how much is done. [*Exeunt.*

Scene IV. *Hall in the Palace.*

A Banquet prepared. Enter Macbeth, Lady Macbeth, Ross, Lennox, *Lords and Attendants.*

Macb. You know your own *degrees,*[1] sit down; at first
And last* the hearty welcome.
Lords. Thanks to your majesty.
Macb. Ourself will mingle with society
And play the humble host.
Our hostess keeps her *state,*[2] but *in best time,*[3]
We will require her[4] welcome.
Lady M. Pronounce it for me, sir, to all our friends;
For my heart speaks they are welcome.
First Murderer appears at the door.
Macb. See, they *encounter*[5] thee with their hearts' thanks.
Both sides are even: here I'll sit i' the midst:
Be *large*[6] in mirth; anon, we'll drink a measure
The table round. [*Approaching the door.*] There's blood upon thy face.
Mur. 'Tis Banquo's, then.
Macb. 'Tis better thee *without*[7] than he within.
Is he dispatch'd?
Mur. My lord, his throat is cut; that I did for him.

[1] *ranks, hence positions at table*
[2] *chair of state*
[3] *at the proper time*
[4] *call upon her to bid you*
[5] *reply to (by their actions)*
[6] *free, unconstrained*
[7] *outside (the door)*

*In the first place and in the last place; hence, once for all.

Macb. Thou art the best o' the cut-throats; yet he 's good,
That did the like for Fleance: if thou didst it,
Thou art the *nonpareil.*[1]
Mur. Most royal sir,
Fleance is 'scaped.
Macb. [*Aside.*] Then comes my fit again: I had else been perfect,
Whole[2] as the marble, founded as the rock,
As broad and general as the casing air:*
But now, I am cabin 'd, cribb 'd, confined, bound in†
To *saucy*[3] doubts and fears.—But Banquo 's safe?
Mur. Ay, my good lord: safe in a ditch he bides,
With twenty *trenchéd*[4] gashes on his head,
The least a death to nature.
Macb. Thanks for that.
[*Aside.*] There the grown serpent lies; the *worm*[5] that 's fled
Hath nature that in time will venom breed,
No teeth for the present.—Get thee gone: to-morrow
We 'll hear *ourselves*[6] again. [*Exit Murderer.*
Lady M. My royal lord,
You do not give the *cheer.*[7] The feast is sold
That is not often vouch 'd, while 'tis a-making,
'Tis given with welcome: to feed were best at home;
From thence the sauce to meat is ceremony;
Meeting were bare without it.‡

[1] *unmatched, have no equal*
[2] *sound*
[3] *violent*
[4] *deep-cut*
[5] i.e. *Fleance*
[6] *each other*
[7] *cheerful welcome*

*As absolutely free and unrestrained as is the surrounding air.

†These expressions are nearly, but not quite synonymous, each being a stronger word than the preceding, *e.g.* imprisoned, caged, bound in, enslaved to.

‡A feast to invited guests is no better than a meal that is had for payment if it is not often asserted during its progress that the guests are heartily welcome. Mere feeding is best done at home: away from home, some forms of ceremony are required to give zest to the banquet. If these forms be absent, it is no feast at all.

Macb. Sweet remembrancer!
Now good digestion wait on appetite,
And health on both!
Len. May 't please your highness sit?
[*Enter the Ghost of* Banquo, *and sits in* Macbeth's *place.*]
Macb. Here had we now our country's honour roof'd,*
Were the *graced*[1] person of our Banquo present;
Who may I rather challenge for[2] unkindness
Than pity *for mischance!*[3]
Ross. His absence, sir,
Lays blame upon his promise. Please 't your highness
To *grace*[4] us with your royal company?
Macb. The table 's full.
Len. Here is a place reserved, sir.
Macb. Where?
Len. Here, my good lord. What is 't that moves your highness?
Macb. Which of you have done this?
Lords. What, my good lord?
Macb. Thou canst not say I did it: never shake
Thy gory locks at me.
Ross. Gentlemen, rise: his highness is not well.
Lady M. Sit, worthy friends: my lord is often thus,
And hath been from his youth: pray you, keep seat;
The fit is momentary: *upon a thought*[5]
He will again be well: if much you *note*[6] him,
You shall offend him, and extend his passion:
Feed, and regard him not. Are you a man?
Macb. Ay, and a bold one, that dare look on that
Which might appal the devil.
Lady M. O *proper stuff!*[7]

[1] *gracious*
[2] *whom I hope I may rather accuse of*
[3] *on account of any accident*
[4] *favor*
[5] *in an instant*
[6] *notice*
[7] *a fine tale*

*We should now have under this roof all the distinguished persons who are an honor to our country.

This is *the very*[1] painting of your fear:
This is the air-drawn dagger which, you said,
Led you to Duncan. O, these *flaws*[2] and *starts*,[2]
Impostors *to*[3] true fear, would well become
A woman's story at a winter's fire,
Authorised by her grandam. Shame itself!
Why do you make such faces? When all 's done,
You look but on a stool.
Macb. Prithee, see there! behold! look! lo! how say you?
Why, what care I? If thou canst nod, speak too.
If *charnel-houses*,[4] and our graves, must send
Those that we bury back, *our monuments*
Shall be the maws of kites.[5] [*Ghost vanishes.*
Lady M. What, quite unmann'd in folly?
Macb. If I stand here, I saw him.
Lady M. Fie, for shame!
Macb. Blood hath been shed ere now, i' the olden time,
Ere human statute *purged the gentle weal;*[6]
Ay, and since too, murders have been perform'd
Too terrible for the ear: the time has been,
That, when the brains were out, the man would die,
And there an end; but now they rise again,
With *twenty mortal murders*[7] on their crowns,
And push us from our stools: this is more strange
Than such a murder is.
Lady M. My worthy lord,
Your noble friends do *lack*[8] you.
Macb. I do forget.
Do not muse at me, my most worthy friends;
I have a strange infirmity, which is nothing
To those that know me. Come, love and health to all;
Then I 'll sit down. Give me some wine; fill full.
I drink to the general joy o' the whole table,
And to our dear friend Banquo, whom we miss;
Would he were here! to all and him we thirst,

[1] *merely the*

[2] *gusts (of fear).* See V. i. 50

[3] *compared with*

[4] *tombs*

[5] *we shall be food for the stomach of kites, which will become our monuments*

[6] *purified society and made it gentle*

[7] *fatal wounds.* Cf. l. 27

[8] *miss*

And *all*[1] to all.
Lords. Our duties, and the pledge.

Re-enter Ghost.

Macb. *Avaunt!*[2] and quit my sight! Let the earth hide thee!
Thy bones are marrowless, thy blood is cold;
Thou hast no *speculation*[3] in those eyes
Which thou dost glare with.
Lady M. Think of this, good peers,
But as a thing of custom: 'tis *no other;*[4]
Only it spoils the pleasure of the time
Macb. What man dare, I dare:
Approach thou like the rugged Russian bear,
The *arm'd*[5] rhinoceros, or the Hyrcan tiger;
Take any shape but that, and my firm *nerves*[6]
Shall never tremble: or, be alive again,
And *dare*[7] me to the desert with thy sword;
If trembling I inhabit then,* *protest*[8] me
The baby of a girl. Hence, horrible shadow!
Unreal mockery, hence! [*Ghost vanishes.*]
Why, so; being gone,
I am a man again. Pray you, sit still.
Lady M. You have *displaced*[9] the mirth,
broke the good meeting
With most *admired*[10] disorder.
Macb. Can such things be,
And *overcome*[11] us like a summer's cloud,
Without our special wonder? You make me strange†
Even to the disposition that I *owe,*[12]
When now I think you can behold such sights,
And keep the natural ruby of your cheeks,
When mine is blanch'd with fear.
Ross. What sights, my lord?

[1] *all good wishes*
[2] *away*
[3] *power of sight*
[4] *nothing else*
[5] *armored—referring to its hide*
[6] *sinews*
[7] *challenge*
[8] *declare*
[9] *dispelled*
[10] *wonder-raising*
[11] *come over*
[12] *possess*

*If I then remain trembling, taking "inhabit" = dwell, remain; *or*, If I then put on a trembling, taking "inhabit" = to take as a habit (whether a costume or a custom).

†You make me a stranger to (hence, wonder at) my own nature; *i.e.* you make me regard my own nature as abnormal.

Lady M. I pray you, speak not; he grows worse and worse;
Question enrages him: At once, good night:
Stand not upon[1] the order of your going
But go at once.
Len. Good night; and better health
Attend his majesty!
Lady M. A kind good night to all!

[*Exeunt all but* MACBETH *and* LADY MACBETH.

Macb. It will have blood: they say blood will have blood:
Stones have been known to move, and trees to speak;
Augures* and understood relations have
By *maggot-pies*[2] and *choughs*[3] and rooks brought forth
The secret 'st man of blood.* What is the night?
Lady M. Almost at odds with morning, which is which.
Macb. How say'st thou, that Macduff denies his person
At our great bidding?
Lady M. Did you send to him, sir?
Macb. I hear it by the way; but I will send.
There 's not a one of them but in his house
I keep a servant *fee'd*.[4] I *will*[5] to-morrow,
And betimes I will, to the weird sisters:
More shall they speak; for now I am bent to know,
By the worst means, the *worst*.[6] *For mine own good*[7]
All causes shall give way: I *am*[8] in blood
Stepp'd in so far that, should I wade no more,
Returning were as tedious *as go o'er*.[9]
Strange things I have in head that will to hand,
Which must be acted ere they may be scann'd.

[1] *be not particular about*
[2] *magpies*
[3] *jackdaws*
[4] *in my pay*
[5] sc. *go*
[6] sc. *news*
[7] *to my interests*
[8] *have*
[9] *as to go on to the end*

*The science of divination ("Augures") and a proper understanding of the relation existing between signs and the events they refer to ("understood relations") have, by means of magpies, jackdaws, and rooks, brought to light murderers whose deeds have been done with the utmost secrecy.

Lady M. You lack *the season of*[1] all natures, sleep.

[1] *that . which preserves*

Macb. Come, we'll to sleep. My strange and self-abuse
Is the initiate fear, that wants hard use:*
We are yet but young in deed. [*Exeunt.*

Scene V. *A Heath.*

Thunder. Enter the three Witches, meeting Hecate.

1 Witch. Why, how now, Hecate! you look angerly.

Hec. Have I not reason, *beldams*[2] as you are,
Saucy and overbold? How did you dare
To trade and traffic with Macbeth
In riddles and affairs of death;
And I, the mistress of your charms,
The *close contriver*[3] of all harms,
Was never call'd to bear my part,
Or show the glory of our art?
And, *which*[4] is worse, all you have done
Hath been but for a *wayward son*,[5]
Spiteful and wrathful; who, as others do,
Loves for his own ends, not for you.
But make amends now get you gone,
And at the pit of *Acheron*[6]
Meet me i' the morning: thither he
Will come to know his destiny.
Your vessels and your spells provide,
Your charms and everything beside.
I am for the air; this night I'll spend
Unto a dismal and a fatal end:
Great business must be wrought ere noon:
Upon the corner of the moon
There hangs a *vaporous drop profound*;[7]
I'll catch it ere it come to ground:

[2] *hags*

[3] *secret schemer*

[4] *what*

[5] *Macbeth*

[6] *some gloomy spot.* See Note III. v. 15

[7] *a low-hanging drop of vapor*

*The strange manner in which I have allowed myself to be deceived is the result of fear, such as is felt by a beginner in crime, whose qualms will pass away as he becomes hardened in wickedness.

And that, distill'd by magic *sleights*,[1]
Shall raise such *artificial*[2] sprites
As, by the strength of their *illusion*,[3]
Shall draw him on to his *confusion*.[4]
He shall spurn fate, scorn death, and bear
His hopes 'bove wisdom, grace, and fear:
And you all know, *security*[5]
Is mortals' chiefest enemy.

[*Music and a Song, within:* "Come away, come away," etc.

Hark! I am call'd: my *little spirit*,[6] see,
Sits in a foggy cloud, and stays for me. [*Exit.*

1 Witch. Come, let's make haste; she'll soon be back again. [*Exeunt.*

[1] *arts*
[2] *brought forth by art*
[3] *deceptive appearance*
[4] *destruction*
[5] *over-confidence, carelessness*
[6] *familiar.* See Note I. i. 8

SCENE VI. *Forres. The Palace.*

Enter LENNOX *and another Lord.*

Len. My former speeches have but hit your thoughts,
Which can *interpret further*:[7] only, I say,
Things have been strangely *borne*.[8] The gracious Duncan
Was pitied of Macbeth: marry, he *was dead*:[9]
And the right-valiant Banquo walk'd too late;
Whom, you may say, if 't please you, Fleance kill'd,
For Fleance fled: men must not walk too late.
Who cannot want the thought,[10] how *monstrous*[11]
It was for Malcolm and for Donalbain
To kill their gracious father? damnéd *fact!*[12]
How it did grieve Macbeth! did he not straight,
In pious rage, the two delinquents tear,
That were the slaves of drink and *thralls*[13] of sleep?
Was not that nobly done? Ay, and wisely too;
For 'twould have anger'd any heart alive
To hear the men deny 't. So that, I say,
He has *borne*[14] all things well: and I do think,
That, had he Duncan's sons under his key,—

[7] *suggest other instances*
[8] *carried on*
[9] i.e. *when Macbeth pitied him*
[10] *can any one help thinking*
[11] *inhuman*
[12] *deed, crime*; L. *factum*
[13] *slaves*
[14] *managed*

As, an 't please heaven, he shall *not*,[1]—they should find
What 'twere to kill a father; so should Fleance.
But, peace! for *from broad words*,[2] and 'cause he fail'd
His presence at the tyrant's feast, I hear
Macduff lives in disgrace: sir, can you tell
Where he bestows himself?
Lord. The son of Duncan
From whom this tyrant *holds the due of birth*,[3]
Lives in the English court, and is received
Of the most pious *Edward*[4] with such grace
That the *malevolence*[5] of fortune nothing
Takes from his high respect: thither Macduff
Is gone to pray the holy king, *upon*[6] his aid
To *wake*[7] Northumberland and warlike Siward;
That, by help of these, with Him above
To ratify the work, we may again
Give to our tables meat, sleep to our nights,
Free from our feasts and banquets bloody knives,
Do *faithful*[8] homage and receive *free honours*:[9]
All which we pine for now: and this report
Hath so exasperate the king, that he
Prepares for some attempt of war.
Len. Sent he to Macduff?
Lord. He did: and with an absolute "Sir, not I,"
The *cloudy*[10] messenger turns *me*[11] his back,
And hums, as who should say, "You'll rue the time
That *clogs*[12] me with this answer."
Len. And that well might
Advise him to a caution, to hold what distance
His wisdom can provide. Some holy angel
Fly to the court of England, and unfold
His message ere he come, that a swift blessing
May soon return to this our *suffering country*[13]
Under a hand accursed!
Lord. I'll send my prayers with him.

[*Exeunt.*

[1] sc. *have*
[2] *on account of some free speaking*
[3] *is keeping his rightful inheritance*
[4] i.e. *the Confessor*
[5] *enmity*
[6] *to come to*
[7] *rouse*
[8] *legitimate* (i.e. *to the rightful king*)
[9] *the honors due to free men*
[10] *sullen*
[11] *ethic dative*
[12] *burdens*
[13] *country suffering*

ACT IV.

SCENE I. *A Cavern. In the middle a boiling Cauldron.*

Thunder. Enter the three Witches.

1 Witch. Thrice the *brinded*[1] cat hath mew'd.
2 Witch. *Thrice and once*[2] the hedge-*pig*[3] whined.
3 Witch. Harpier cries, "'Tis time, 'tis time."
1 Witch. Round about the cauldron go;
In the poison'd entrails throw.
Toad, that under *cold*[4] stone
Days and nights has thirty one
Swelter'd[5] venom, sleeping got,
Boil thou first i' the charméd pot.
All. *Double, double*[6] toil and trouble:
Fire burn and cauldron bubble.
2 Witch. *Fillet*[7] of a fenny snake,
In the cauldron boil and bake;
Eye of newt and toe of frog,
Wool[8] of bat and tongue of dog,
Adder's fork and *blind-worm's*[9] sting,
Lizard's leg and *howlet's*[10] wing,
For a charm of powerful trouble,
Like a hell-broth boil and bubble.
All. Double, double toil and trouble;
Fire burn and cauldron bubble.
3 Witch. Scale of dragon, tooth of wolf,
Witches *mummy*,[11] *maw and gulf*[12]
Of the *ravin'd*[13] salt-sea shark,
Root of hemlock digg'd i' the dark,
Liver of blaspheming Jew,
Gall of goat, and slips of yew
Sliver'd[14] in the moon's eclipse,
Nose of Turk, and Tartar's lips,

[1] *brindled, i.e. marked like a tiger*
[2] *observe the odd numbers*
[3] *hog*
[4] *dissyllable*
[5] *exuded*
[6] *let us double*
[7] *slice*
[8] *down, soft feathers*
[9] *slow-worm*
[10] *young owl*
[11] *dried carcass*
[12] *stomach and gullet*
[13] *ravenous*
[14] *stripped off*

Finger of birth-strangled babe
Make the gruel thick and *slab:*[1]
Add thereto a tiger's *chaudron,*[2]
For the ingredients of our cauldron.
All. Double, double toil and trouble;
Fire burn and cauldron bubble.
2 Witch. Cool it with a báboon's blood,
Then the charm is firm and good.

Enter Hecate *to the other three Witches.*

Hec. O, well done! I commend your pains·
And every one shall share i' the gains.
And now about the cauldron sing,
Like elves and fairies in a ring,
Enchanting all that you put in.

[*Music and a Song,* "Black spirits," etc.

[Hecate *retires.*

2 Witch. By the pricking of my thumbs,
Something wicked this way comes: [*Knocking.*

Open, locks,
Whoever knocks!

Enter Macbeth.

Macb. How now, you secret, black, and midnight hags!
What is 't you do?
All. A deed without a name.
Macb. I cónjure you, by that which you profess,
Howe'er you come to know it, answer me:
Though you untie the winds, and let them fight
Against the churches; though the *yesty*[3] waves
Confound[4] and swallow *navigation*[5] up;
Though *bladed corn*[6] be *lodged,*[7] and trees blown down;
Though castles topple on their warders' heads;
Though palaces, and pyramids do slope
Their heads to their foundations; though the treasure

[1] *slimy*
[2] *entrails*
[3] *foaming, seething*
[4] *destroy*
[5] *abstract for concrete*
[6] *grain in the blade; unripe grain*
[7] *laid low or flat*

Of nature's *germens*[1] tumble all together,
Even till destruction sicken;* answer me
To what I ask you.
1 Witch. Speak.
2 Witch. Demand.
3 Witch. We'll answer.
1 Witch. Say, if thou'dst rather hear it from our mouths,
Or from our masters?
Macb. Call 'em; let me see 'em.
1 Witch. Pour in sow's blood, that hath eaten
Her *nine farrow*,[2] grease that 's *sweaten*[3]
From the murderer's gibbet throw
Into the flame.
All. Come, high or low;
Thyself and office deftly show!

Thunder. First Apparition: an armed Head.[4]

Macb. Tell me, thou unknown power,—
1 Witch. He knows thy thought:
Hear his speech, but say thou nought.
1 App. Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth! beware Macduff;
Beware the thane of Fife. Dismiss me: enough.
[*Descends.*
Macb. Whate'er thou art, for thy good caution thanks:
Though hast *harp'd*[5] my fear aright. But one word more.—
1 Witch. He will not be commanded. Here 's another,
More potent than the first.

Thunder. Second Apparition: a Bloody Child.[6]

2 App. Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth!
Macb. Had I three ears, I 'ld hear thee.
2 App. Be bloody, bold, and resolute; laugh to scorn

[1] *germs, buds, or shoots*
[2] *litter of nine*
[3] *fallen in sweat*
[4] *symbolical of Macbeth himself.* See stage directions, V. viii. 53
[5] *touched*
[6] *symbolizing Macduff.* See V. viii. 16

*Though the precious seeds (or elements) from which all life springs be hopelessly destroyed, so that even destruction itself grows weary of its work.

The power of man, for none of woman born
Shall harm Macbeth. [*Descends.*

Macb. Then live, Macduff: what need I fear of thee?
But yet I'll make assurance double sure,
And take a *bond*[1] *of*[2] fate:* thou shalt not live;
That I may tell pale-hearted fear it lies,
And sleep in spite of thunder.

Thunder. Third Apparition: a Child crowned,[3] *with a tree in his hand.*

What is this,
That rises like the *issue*[4] of a king;
And wears upon his baby-brow the *round*
And top[5] of sovereignty?

All. Listen, but speak not to 't.

3 App. Be lion-mettled, proud, and take no care
Who chafes, who *frets*,[6] or where conspirers are:
Macbeth shall never vanquish'd be, until
Great Birnam Wood to high Dunsinane hill
Shall come against him. [*Descends.*

Macb. That will never be:
Who can *impress*[7] the forest, bid the tree
Unfix his earth-bound root? Sweet *bodements!*[8] good!
Rebellion's head, rise never, till the wood
Of Birnam rise, and our high-placed Macbeth
Shall live the *lease of nature*,[9] pay his *breath*[10]
To time and mortal custom. Yet my heart
Throbs to know one thing: tell me, if your art
Can tell so much: shall Banquo's issue ever
Reign in this kingdom?

All. Seek to know no more.

Macb. I will be satisfied: deny me this,

[1] *pledge, security*
[2] *from*
[3] *representing the future king Malcolm*
[4] *offspring*
[5] *crown and its ornaments*
[6] *rages*
[7] *press into service, enroll by force*
[8] *predictions*
[9] *natural term of years*
[10] *life*

*The meaning is: "I have been assured that none of woman born shall harm me. Therefore I need fear no man. But I will not let this assurance suffice. In order that I may be doubly secured I will make fate (or destiny) give me a bond (which is stronger than an assurance)."

The murder of Macduff would be a security taken from fate pledging the fulfilment of its assurance.

And an eternal curse fall on you! Let me know.
Why sinks that cauldron? and what noise is this?
[*Hautboys.*

1 Witch. Show!
2 Witch. Show!
3 Witch. Show!
All. Show his eyes and grieve his heart;
Come like shadows, so depart!

A show[1] *of eight Kings,*[2] *the last with a glass*[3] *in his hand;* BANQUO'S *Ghost following.*

Macb. Thou art too like the spirit of Banquo; down!
Thy crown does *sear*[4] mine eye-balls. And thy hair,
Thou other *gold-bound*[5] brow, is like the first.
A third is like the former. Filthy hags!
Why do you show me this? A fourth! *Start,*[6] eyes!
What! will the line stretch out to the *crack of doom*[7]
Another yet! A seventh! I'll see no more:
And yet the eighth appears, who bears a *glass,*[3]
Which shows me many more; and some I see
That two-fold balls and treble scepters carry:*
Horrible sight! Now I see 'tis true;
For *the blood-bolter'd Banquo*[8] smiles upon me,
And points at them for his. [*Apparitions vanish.*
What! is this so?

1 Witch. Ay sir, all this is so: but why
Stands Macbeth thus amazedly?
Come, sisters, cheer we up his sprites,
And show *the best of our delights.*[9]
I'll charm the air to give a sound,
While you perform your antic round,
That this great king may kindly say,
Our duties did his welcome pay.[10]

[*Music. The Witches dance, and then vanish, with* HECATE.

Macb. Where are they? Gone? Let this *pernicious*[11] hour

[1] *procession*
[2] *Scotch kings, ancestors of James I, King of England*
[3] *mirror*
[4] *burn, scorch*
[5] *crowned*
[6] *leap from your sockets*
[7] *judgment-day*
[8] *Banquo with his hair matted with thick blood*
[9] *our best diversions or games*
[10] *we have given him a respectful welcome*
[11] *deadly*

*See Note IV. i. 121, p. 158.

Stand aye accurséd in the calendar!
Come in, without there!

Enter Lennox.

Len. What 's your grace's will?
Macb. Saw you the weird sisters?
Len. No, my lord.
Macb. Came they not by you?
Len. No indeed, my lord.
Macb. Infected be the air whereon they *ride*;[1]
And damn'd all those that trust them! I did hear
The galloping of horse: who was 't came by?
Len. 'Tis two or three, my lord, that bring you word,
Macduff is fled to England.
Macb. Fled to England!
Len. Ay, my good lord.
Macb. [*Aside.*] Time, thou *anticipatest*[2] my dread exploits:
The *flighty*[3] purpose never is o'ertook,
Unless the deed go with it: from this moment
The very *firstlings*[4] of my heart shall be
The *firstlings*[4] of my hand.* And even now,
To crown my thoughts with acts, be it *thought and*[5] done:
The castle of Macduff I will surprise;
Seize upon Fife; give to the edge o' the sword
His wife, his babes, and all unfortunate souls
That *trace him in his line*.[6] No boasting like a fool;
This deed I 'll do before this purpose cool:
But no more sights!—Where are these gentlemen?
Come, bring me where they are. [*Exeunt.*

[1] see Introduction, p. 34
[2] *preventest*
[3] *fleeting*
[4] *first-fruit*
[5] *no sooner thought than*
[6] *carry on his line of descent*

Scene II. *Fife.* Macduff's *Castle.*

Enter Lady Macduff, *her Son, and* Ross.

Lady M. What had he done, to make him fly the land?

*I.e. Action shall accompany thought.

Ross. You must have patience, madam.
Lady M. He had none:
His flight was madness: when our actions do not,
Our fears do make us traitors.
Ross. You know not
Whether it was his wisdom or his fear.
Lady M. Wisdom! to leave his wife, to leave his babes,
His mansion, and his *titles*,[1] in a place
From whence himself does fly? He loves us not;
He wants the *natural touch*,[2] for the poor wren,
The most diminutive of birds, will fight,
Her young ones in her nest, against the owl.
All is the fear and nothing is the love;*
As little is the wisdom, where the flight
So runs against all reason.
Ross. My dearest coz,
I pray you, school yourself: but for your husband,
He is noble, wise, judicious, and best *knows*
The fits o' the season.[3] I dare not speak much further;
But cruel are the times, when we are traitors
And do not know ourselves; when we *hold*[4] rumour
From what we fear, yet know not what we fear,
But float upon a wild and violent sea
Each way and *move*.[5]† I take my leave of you:
Shall not be long but I'll be here again:
Things at the *worst*[6] will cease, or else climb upward
To what they were before. My pretty cousin,
Blessing upon you!

[1] *possessions*
[2] *instincts of nature*
[3] *interprets the sudden and violent disorders of the times*
[4] *accept*
[5] *movement*
[6] *lowest*

*Fear (with Macduff) is everything, while love counts for nothing. Subsequent events and the further unfolding of Macduff's character will show that he is here unjustly censured by his wife, who misjudges his motives.

†The meaning of these lines appears to be: "We are traitors without knowing ourselves to be such (as Macduff was unwittingly a traitor to his wife); our fears suggest rumors to us for which we have no grounds (as Lady Macduff's did), and yet our very fears are vague and undefined and chop and change, as a spar floats this way and that upon the waves of a wild and violent sea."

Lady M. Father'd he is, and yet he 's fatherless.

Ross. I am so much a fool, should I stay longer,
It would be my *disgrace*[1] and your discomfort:
I take my leave at once. [*Exit.*

Lady M. Sirrah, your father 's dead:
And what will you do now? How will you live?

Son. As birds do, mother.

Lady M. What, *with*[2] worms and flies?

Son. *With*[2] what I get, I mean; and so do they.

Lady M. Poor bird! thou 'ldst never fear the net nor *lime*,[3]
The pit-fall nor the *gin*.[4]

Son. Why should I, mother? Poor birds they are not *set for*.[5]
My father is not dead, for all your saying.

Lady M. Yes, he is dead: how wilt thou do for a father?

Son. Nay, how will you do for a husband?

Lady M. Why, I can buy me twenty at any market.

Son. Then you 'll buy 'em to sell again.

Lady M. Thou speak 'st with all thy wit, and yet, i' faith,
With wit enough for thee.

Son. Was my father a traitor, mother?

Lady M. *Ay, that he was.*[6]

Son. What is a traitor?

Lady M. Why, one that *swears and lies*.[7]

Son. And be all traitors that do so?

Lady M. Every one that does so is a traitor, and must be hanged.

Son. And must they all be hanged that swear and lie?

Lady M. Every one.

Son. Who must hang them?

Lady M. Why, the honest men.

Son. Then the liars and swearers are fools; for there are liars and swearers enough to beat the honest men, and hang up them.

[1] i.e. *I should weep*

[2] *on*

[3] *bird-lime*

[4] *trap*

[5] *trapped*

[6] *meaning, of course, a traitor to herself*

[7] *takes and breaks the oath of allegiance*

Lady M. Now God help thee, poor *monkey!*[1]
But how wilt thou do for a father?
Son. If he were dead, you'ld weep for him:
if you would not, it were a good sign that
I should quickly have a new father.
Lady M. Poor prattler, how thou talk'st!

[1] *a term of endearment*

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. Bless you, fair dame! I am not to you known,
Though in your state of honour I am perfect.*
I *doubt*,[2] some danger does approach you nearly:
If you will take a homely man's advice,
Be not found here; hence, with your little ones.
To fright you thus, methinks I am too savage;
To do *worse*[3] to you were *fell*[4] cruelty,
Which[5] is too nigh your person. Heaven preserve you!
I dare abide no longer. [*Exit.*
Lady M. Whither should I fly?
I have done no harm. But I remember now
I am in this earthly world, where to do harm
Is often laudable; to do good sometime
Accounted dangerous folly: why then, alas!
Do I put up that *womanly*[6] defence,
To say I have done no harm? What are these faces?

[2] *fear*
[3] *less*, i.e. *by not telling you your danger*
[4] *frightful*
[5] i.e. *cruelty is already*
[6] *feminine*

Enter Murderers.

1 Mur. Where is your husband?
Lady M. I hope, in no place so unsanctified
Where such as thou mayst find him.
1 Mur. He's a traitor.
Son. Thou liest, thou *shag-hair'd*[7] villain!
1 Mur. What, you egg!
[*Stabbing him.*
Young *fry*[8] of treachery!
Son. He has kill'd me, mother:
Run away, I pray you. [*Dies.*

[7] *shaggy*
[8] *spawn, offspring.* See Glossary

*Though I am perfectly acquainted with your honorable rank.

[*Exit* LADY MACDUFF, *crying "Murder!" and pursued by the Murderers.*

SCENE III. *England. Before the* KING'S *Palace.*

Enter MALCOLM *and* MACDUFF.

Mal. Let us seek out some desolate shade, and there
Weep our sad bosoms empty.
Macd. Let us rather
Hold fast the *mortal*[1] sword, and like *good*[2] men
Bestride[3] our down-fall'n birthdom. Each new morn
New widows howl, new orphans cry, new sorrows
Strike heaven on the face, that[4] it resounds
As if it felt with Scotland and yell'd out
Like *syllable of dolour*.[5]
Mal. What I believe, I'll *wail*,[6]
What know, believe; and what I can redress,
As I shall find the time to friend, I will.
What you have spoke, it may be so perchance.
This tyrant, whose *sole*[7] name blisters our tongues,
Was once thought honest; you have loved him well;
He hath not touch'd you yet. I am young; but something
You may deserve of him through me, and *wisdom*[8]
To offer up a weak poor innocent lamb
To appease an angry god.
Macd. I am not treacherous.
Mal. But Macbeth is.
A good and virtuous nature may *recoil*[9]
In *an imperial charge*.[10] But I shall crave your pardon:
That which you are my thoughts cannot transpose:*

[1] *death-dealing*
[2] *brave*
[3] *stand up in defense of*
[4] *cry aloud to heaven so that*
[5] *cry of pain*
[6] *bewail*
[7] *mere*
[8] sc. *it may be*
[9] *swerve from the right*
[10] *the execution of a king's command*

I.e. My suspicions cannot make you bad if you are good, nor can my thoughts make you good if you are bad. Transpose here means "alter."

Angels are bright still, though the *brightest*[1] fell:
Though all things foul would wear the brows of grace,*
Yet grace[2] must still look *so*.[3]
Macd. I have lost my hopes.
Mal. Perchance even there where I did find my doubts.†
Why in that *rawness*[4] left you wife and child,
Those precious *motives*,[5] those strong knots of love,
Without leave-taking? I pray you,
Let not my *jealousies be your dishonours*,[6]
But mine own safeties. You may be rightly just,
Whatever I shall think.
Macd. Bleed, bleed, poor country!
Great tyranny! lay thou thy basis sure,
For goodness dare not check thee: wear thou thy wrongs;
The title is affeer'd![7] Fare thee well, lord:
I would not be the villain that thou think'st
For the whole space that's in the tyrant's grasp,
And the rich East *to boot*.[8]
Mal. Be not offended:
I speak not as in absolute fear of you.
I think our country sinks beneath the yoke;
It weeps, it bleeds, and each new day a gash
Is added to her wounds: I think withal
There would be hands uplifted in my right;
And here, from gracious *England*[9] have I offer
Of goodly thousands: but, for all this,
When I shall tread upon the tyrant's head,
Or *wear*[10] it on my sword, yet my poor country
Shall have more vices than it had before,

[1] i.e. *Lucifer*
[2] *virtue, excellence*
[3] *the same*
[4] *hurry, haste*
[5] *impulses to love*
[6] *suspicions impute dishonorable motives*
[7] *thy title to them is established*
[8] *in addition*
[9] i.e. *the King of England*
[10] *bear, carry*

*Even if everything that is ugly and base were to assume the beautiful exterior proper to virtue, yet virtue herself must still remain unchanged in appearance. For the sentiment implied, *cf.* I. iv. 11:—

There's no art,
To find the mind's construction in the face.

†*I.e.* Perhaps by finding that I received you with suspicion.

More suffer and more sundry ways than ever,
By[1] him that shall succeed.
Macd. What should he be?
Mal. It is myself I mean; in whom I know
All the *particulars*[2] of vice so grafted,
That, when they *shall be open'd*,[3] black Macbeth
Will seem as pure as snow, and the poor state
Esteem him as a lamb, being compared
With my *confineless harms*.[4]
Macd. Not in the legions
Of horrid hell can come a devil more damn'd
In evils, to *top*[5] Macbeth.
Mal. I grant him bloody,
Luxurious,[6] avaricious, false, deceitful,
Sudden,[7] malicious, smacking of every sin
That has a name: but there's no bottom, none,
In my voluptuousness; better Macbeth,
Than such a one to reign.
Macd. Boundless intemperance
In nature is a tyranny;* it hath been
The untimely emptying of the happy throne
And fall of many kings. But fear not yet
To take upon you *what is yours*:[8] you may
Convey your pleasures in a spacious plenty,
And yet seem cold, the time you may so hoodwink.
Mal. With this, there grows
In my most *ill-composed affection*[9] such
A staunchless avarice that, were I king,
I should cut off the nobles for their lands,
Desire *his*[10] jewels, and this other's house:
And my more-having would be as a sauce
To make me hunger more, *that*[11] I should forge
Quarrels unjust against the good and loyal,
Destroying them for wealth.
Macd. This avarice
Sticks deeper, grows with more pernicious root
Than *summer-seeming*[12] lust; and it hath been

[1] *through, at the hands of*
[2] *particular forms*
[3] *come to blossom*
[4] *infinite wickedness*
[5] *surpass*
[6] *unchaste*
[7] *violent*
[8] i.e. *the sovereignty*
[9] *wrongly constituted nature*
[10] *one man's*
[11] *so that*
[12] *short-lived (as a summer)*

*The unrestrained indulgence of one's natural passions is a usurpation; *i.e.* it usurps the place of the will and the intelligence.

The sword of our slain kings: yet do not fear;
Scotland hath *foisons*[1] to fill up your will,
Of your mere own; all these are *portable*,[2]
With other graces weigh'd.
Mal. But I have none: the king-becoming graces,
As justice, verity, *temperance*,[3] stableness,
Bounty, persevérance, mercy, lowliness,
Devotion, patience, courage, fortitude,
I have no *relish*[4] of them, but abound
In the division of each several crime,*
Acting it many ways. Nay, had I power, I should
Pour the sweet milk of concord into hell,†
Uproar[5] the universal peace, confound
All unity on earth.
Macd. O Scotland, Scotland!
Mal. If such a one be fit to govern, speak:
I am as I have spoken.
Macd. Fit to govern!
No, not to live. O nation miserable,
With an untitled tyrant bloody-scepter'd,
When shalt thou see thy wholesome days again,
Since that the truest issue of thy throne
By his *own interdiction*[6] stands accursed,
And *does blaspheme his breed?*[7] Thy royal father
Was a most sainted king: the queen that bore thee,
Oftener upon her knees than on her feet,
Died[8] every day she lived. Fare thee well!
These evils thou *repeat'st upon*[9] thyself
Have banish'd me from Scotland. O my breast,
Thy hope ends here!
Mal. Macduff, this noble passion,
Child of[10] integrity, hath from my soul
Wiped the black *scruples*,[11] reconciled my thoughts

[1] *rich harvests*
[2] *endurable*
[3] *self-restraint*
[4] *flavor, touch*
[5] *stir up to tumult*
[6] *self-condemnation*
[7] *slanders his own race*
[8] i.e. *prepared to die*
[9] *recitest against*
[10] *born of*
[11] *suspicions*

*Practice freely every crime in all its variations.

†*I.e.* Banish from the earth the gentle influence of peace and harmony.

To thy good truth and honour. Devilish Macbeth
By many of these *trains*[1] hath sought to win me
Into his power, and *modest wisdom*[2] plucks me
From over-credulous haste: but God above
Deal between thee and me! for even now
I put myself to thy direction, and
Unspeak *mine own detraction*,[3] here abjure
The taints and blames I laid upon myself,
For[4] strangers to my nature. I am pure,
Scarcely have coveted what was mine own,
At no time broke my faith, would not betray
The devil to his fellow, and delight
No less in truth than life: my first false speaking
Was this upon myself: what I am truly,
Is thine and my poor country's, to command:
Whither indeed, before thy here-approach,
Old Siward, with ten thousand warlike men
Already *at a point*,[5] was setting forth.
Now we 'll together; and the chance of goodness
Be like our warranted quarrel!* Why are you silent?

Macd. Such welcome and unwelcome things at once
'Tis hard to reconcile.

Enter a Doctor.

Mal. Well; more anon. Comes the king forth, I pray you?

Doct. Ay, sir; there are a crew of wretched souls
That *stay*[6] his cure: their malady *convinces*[7]
The *great assay of art;*[8] but at his touch,
Such sanctity hath heaven given his hand,
They *presently*[9] amend.

Mal. I thank you, doctor. [*Exit Doctor.*

Macd. What 's the disease he means?

Mal. 'Tis call'd the *evil;*[10]
A most miraculous work in this good king;

[1] *artifices*
[2] *sober prudence*
[3] *charges against myself*
[4] *as*
[5] *fully prepared*
[6] *await*
[7] *beats, baffles*
[8] *efforts of great medical skill*
[9] *at once*
[10] i.e. *King's evil*. See Note IV. iii. 138

*May our chance of success equal the justness of our cause!

Which often, since my here-remain in England,
I have seen him do. How he solicits heaven,
Himself best knows: but *strangely-visited*[1] people,
All swoln and ulcerous, pitiful to the eye,
The mere despair of surgery, he cures,
Hanging a *golden stamp*[2] about their necks,
Put on with holy prayers: and 'tis spoken,
To the succeeding royalty he leaves
The *healing benediction.*[3] With this strange virtue,
He hath a heavenly gift of prophecy,
And sundry blessings hang about his throne,
That *speak*[4] him full of grace.

[1] i.e. *afflicted with strange diseases*

[2] *a gold coin (as a charm)*

[3] *blessed gift of healing*

[4] *bespeak*

Enter ROSS.

Macd. See, who comes here?
Mal. My countryman; but yet I know him not.
Macd. My ever-gentle cousin, welcome hither.
Mal. I know him now. Good God, betimes remove
The means that makes us strangers!
Ross. Sir, amen.
Macd. Stands Scotland where it did?
Ross. Alas, poor country!
Almost afraid to know itself. It cannot
Be call'd our mother, but our grave; where nothing,
But who knows nothing, is once seen to smile;
Where sighs and groans and shrieks that rend the air
Are made, not *mark'd;*[5] where violent sorrow seems
A modern ecstasy;[6] the dead man's knell
Is there scarce ask'd for who; and good men's lives
Expire before the flowers in their caps,
Dying *or ere*[7] they sicken.
Macd. O, *relation*[8]
Too *nice,*[9] and yet too true!

[5] *noticed*

[6] *an every-day excitement of the mind*

[7] *before*

[8] *report, narrative*

[9] *labored, minute*

Mal. What 's the newest grief?
Ross. That of an hour's age doth *hiss*[1] the speaker;
Each minute *teems*[2] a new one.
Macd. How does my wife?
Ross. Why, well.
Macd. And all my children?
Ross. Well, too.
Macd. The tyrant has not *batter'd at*[3] their peace?
Ross. No; they were well at peace, when I did leave 'em.
Macd. Be not a niggard of your speech: how goes 't?
Ross. When I came hither to transport the tidings,
Which I have *heavily*[4] borne, there ran a rumour
Of many worthy fellows that were *out;*[5]
Which was to my belief witness'd the rather,
For that I saw the tyrant's power a-foot.
Now is the time of help; your eye in Scotland
Would create soldiers, make our women fight,
To *doff*[6] their dire distresses.
Mal. Be 't their comfort
We are coming thither. Gracious England hath
Lent us good Siward and ten thousand men;
An older and a better soldier none
That Christendom *gives out.*[7]
Ross. Would I could answer
This comfort with the like! But I have words
That *would*[8] be howl'd out in the desert air,
Where hearing should not *latch*[9] them.
Macd. What concern they?
The general cause? or is it a *fee-grief*
Due to some single breast?[10]
Ross. No mind that 's honest
But in it shares some woe, though the main part
Pertains to you alone.
Macd. If it be mine
Keep it not from me, quickly let me have it.

[1] *cause to be hissed*
[2] *brings forth*
[3] *attacked*
[4] *with heavy heart*
[5] *up in arms*
[6] *do-off, be rid of*
[7] *has to show*
[8] *ought to*
[9] *catch*
[10] i.e. *a grief that has a particular owner; a personal sorrow.* See Note IV. iii. 188

Ross. Let not your ears despise my tongue for ever,
Which shall *possess them with*[1] the heaviest sound
That ever yet they heard.
Macd. Hum! I guess at it.
Ross. Your castle is surprised; your wife and babes
Savagely slaughter'd: to relate the manner,
Were, on the *quarry*[2] of these murder'd deer
To add the death of you.*
Mal. Merciful Heaven!
What, man! ne'er pull your hat upon your brows;
Give sorrow words: the grief that does not speak
Whispers the *o'er-fraught*[3] heart and bids it break.
Macd. My children too?
Ross. Wife, children, servants, all
That could be found.
Macd. And I must be from thence!
My wife kill'd too?
Ross. I have said.
Mal. Be comforted:
Let 's make *us*[4] medicines *of*[5] our great revenge,
To cure this deadly grief.
Macd. *He*[6] has no children. All my pretty ones?
Did you say, all? O hell-kite! All?
What, all my pretty chickens and their dam
At one fell swoop?
Mal. *Dispute it*[7] like a man.
Macd. I shall do so.
But I must also feel it as a man:
I cannot but remember such things were,
That were most precious to me. Did Heaven look on,
And would not take their part? Sinful Macduff,

[1] *put them in possession*
[2] *heap (of dead bodies)*
[3] *over-charged*
[4] *for ourselves*
[5] *out of*
[6] *Malcolm*
[7] *battle with your grief*

*The meaning is: "To tell you the particulars of their death would be to add your death to theirs and so increase the number of the slain." There is a play on the word "deer," which, while meaning literally "game," implies also "dear ones."

They were all struck *for*[1] thee! naught that I am,
Not for their own *demerits*,[2] but for mine,
Fell slaughter on their souls. Heaven rest them now!

Mal. Be this the whetstone of your sword: let grief
Convert to anger; blunt not the heart, enrage it.

Macd. O, I could play the woman with mine eyes
And braggart with my tongue! But, gentle heavens,
Cut short all *intermission*;[3] front to front
Bring thou this fiend of Scotland and myself;
Within my sword's length set him. If he 'scape,
Heaven forgive him too!

Mal. This tune goes manly.
Come, go we to the king; our *power*[4] is ready;
Our lack is nothing but our leave.* Macbeth
Is *ripe for shaking*,[5] and the powers above
Put on their instruments.† Receive what *cheer*[6] you may:
The night is long that never finds the day.

[*Exeunt.*

[1] *on account of*
[2] *faults*
[3] *delay*
[4] *army*
[5] i.e. *ready to fall (like ripe fruit)*
[6] *encouragement*

*Nothing is lacking but that we should take our leave.

†Heaven is now setting to work its ministers of vengeance (*i.e.* Malcolm, Macduff, and their army).

ACT V.

SCENE I. *Dunsinane. Ante-room in the Castle.*

Enter a Doctor of Physic and a Waiting-Gentlewoman.

Doct. I have two nights watched with you, but can perceive no truth in your report. When was it she last walked?

Gent. Since his majesty went into the field, I have seen her rise from her bed, throw her *night-gown*[1] upon her, unlock her closet, take forth paper, fold it, write upon 't, read it, afterwards seal it, and again return to bed; yet all this while in a most fast sleep.

Doct. A great *perturbation*[2] in nature, to receive at once the benefit of sleep, and *do the effects of watching.*[3] In this slumbery agitation, besides her walking and other actual performances, what, at any time, have you heard her say?

Gent. That, sir, which I will not report after her.

Doct. You may, to me; and 't is most meet you should.

Gent. Neither to you nor any one, having no witness to confirm my speech. Lo you, here she comes!

Enter LADY MACBETH, *with a taper.*

This is her very *guise;*[4] and, upon my life, fast asleep. Observe her; *stand close.*[5]

Doct. How came she by that light?

Gent. Why, it stood by her: she has light by her continually; 'tis her command.

[1] *dressing-gown*

[2] *confusion*

[3] *perform the actions of one who is awake*

[4] *custom, way*

[5] i.e. *keep out of sight*

Doct. You see, her eyes are open.

Gent. Ay, but *their sense is shut.*[1]

Doct. What is it she does now? Look, how she rubs her hands.

Gent. It is an *accustomed*[2] action with her, to seem thus washing her hands: I have known her continue in this a quarter of an hour.

Lady M. Yet here's a spot.

Doct. Hark! she speaks: I will set down what comes from her, to satisfy my remembrance the more strongly.

Lady M. Out, damnéd spot! out, I say!—One: two: why, then 'tis time to do 't.—Hell is murky!—Fie, my lord, fie! a soldier, and afeard? What need we fear who knows it, when none can call our power to account?—Yet who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him?

Doct. Do you mark that?

Lady M. *The thane of Fife*[3] had a wife: where is she now?—What, will these hands ne'er be clean?—No more o' that my lord, no more o' that: you mar all with this *starting.*[4]

Doct. Go to, go to; you have known what you should not.

Gent. She has spoke what she should not, I am sure of that: heaven knows what she has known.

Lady M. Here 's the smell of the blood still: all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand. Oh . . oh . . oh!

Doct. What a sigh is there! The heart is *sorely charged.*[5]

Gent. I would not have such a heart in my bosom for *the dignity of the whole body.*[6]

Doct. Well, well, well,—

Gent. Pray God it *be,*[7] sir.

Doct. This disease is beyond my practice: yet I have known those which have walked in their sleep, who have died holily in their beds.

Lady M. Wash your hands, put on your

[1] *the sense of sight is excluded*

[2] *customary*

[3] *Macduff*

[4] see III. iv. 63

[5] *oppressed with a sore weight*

[6] *all the honors that are rendered to her*

[7] sc. *well*

nightgown;[1] look not so pale.—I tell you yet again, Banquo 's buried; he cannot come out on 's grave.

[1] *dressing-gown*

Doct. Even so?

Lady M. To bed, to bed: there 's knocking at the gate. Come, come, come, come, give me your hand:—What 's done cannot be undone. To bed, to bed, to bed! [*Exit.*

Doct. Will she go now to bed?

Gent. Directly.

Doct. Foul *whisperings*[2] are abroad, unnatural deeds
Do breed unnatural troubles: infected minds
To their deaf pillows will discharge their secrets:
More needs she the divine than the physician.
God, God forgive us all! Look after her;
Remove from her *the means of all annoyance*,[3]
And *still*[4] keep eyes upon her. So, good night:
My mind she has *mated*,[5] and amazed my sight.
I think, but dare not speak.

[2] *rumors*

[3] *all means of injuring herself*

[4] *constantly*

[5] *confounded, amazed*

Gent. Good night, good doctor. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *The Country near Dunsinane.*

Drums and colours. Enter MENTEITH, CAITHNESS, ANGUS, LENNOX, *and Soldiers.*

Ment. The English *power*[6] is near, led on by Malcolm,
His uncle Siward, and the good Macduff:
Revenges burn in them; for their dear causes
Would to the bleeding and the grim alarm
Excite the mortified man.*

[6] *force, army*

Ang. Near Birnam wood

*The causes that are near their hearts would drive a dead man (figuratively) to deeds of blood and horror. The "alarm" is the call or summons to take up arms. Editors generally take "mortified" to mean "dead to ordinary feelings, or to the concerns of the world."

Shall we well meet them; that way are they coming.

Caith. Who knows if Donalbain be with his brother?

Len. For certain sir, he is not. I have a *file*[1] Of all the *gentry:*[2] there is Siward's son, And many *unrough*[3] youths that even now *Protest their first of*[4] manhood.

Ment. What does the tyrant?

Caith. Great Dunsinane he strongly fortifies. Some say he 's mad; others, that lesser hate him, Do call it valiant fury: but, for certain, He cannot buckle his distemper'd cause Within the belt of rule.*

Ang. Now does he feel His secret murders *sticking on his hands;*[5] Now *minutely*[6] revolts upbraid his *faith-breach;*[7] Those he commands move only in command, Nothing in love: now does he feel his title Hang *loose*[8] about him, like a giant's robe Upon a dwarfish thief.

Ment. Who then shall blame His *pester'd*[9] senses to recoil and start, When all that is within him does condemn Itself for being there?

Caith. Well, march we on, To give obedience where 'tis truly owed: Meet we the *medicine*[10] of the sickly weal, And with him pour we *in our country's purge*[11] Each drop of us.

Len. Or so much as it needs To *dew*[12] the *sovereign flower*[13] and drown the weeds. Make we our march towards Birnam.

[*Exeunt, marching.*

[1] *list*
[2] *nobility*
[3] *unbearded*
[4] *give the first proof of their*
[5] *clinging close to him*
[6] *every minute*
[7] *violated faith, treason to his king*
[8] cf. l. 17
[9] *harassed*
[10] *physician, healer (Malcolm)*
[11] *to purge our country (of the tyrant)*
[12] *bedew*
[13] *Malcolm, the supreme healer and sovereign of the country*

Scene III. *Dunsinane. A Room in the Castle.*

Enter Macbeth, *Doctor, and Attendants.*

Macb. Bring me no more reports; let them fly all:

*Maintain authority over his disorganized followers.

Till Birnam wood remove to Dunsinane,
I cannot *taint*[1] with fear. What 's the boy Malcolm?
Was he not born of woman? The spirits that know
All mortal consequences[2] have pronounced me thus:
"Fear not, Macbeth; no man that 's born of woman
Shall e'er have power upon thee." Then fly, false thanes,
And mingle with the *English epicures:*[3]
The mind I *sway by*,[4] and the heart I bear,
Shall never *sag*[5] with doubt nor shake with fear.

[1] *be infected*
[2] *everything that will happen to mortals*
[3] *luxury-loving English*
[4] *that guides my actions*
[5] *droop*

Enter a Servant.

Where gott 'st thou that goose look, thou cream-faced *loon?*[6]
Serv. There is ten thousand—
Macb. Geese, villain?
Serv. Soldiers, sir.
Macb. Go, prick thy face, and over-red thy fear,
Thou *lily-livered*[7] boy. What soldiers, *patch?*[8]
Death of thy soul! those linen cheeks of thine
Are counsellors to[9] fear. What soldiers, whey-face?
Serv. The English force, so please you.
Macb. Take thy face hence. [*Exit Servant.*
Seyton!—I am sick at heart,
When I behold—Seyton, I say!—This *push*[10]
Will *cheer me ever, or disseat me now.*[11]
I have lived long enough: my way of life
Is fall 'n into the *sear*,[12] the yellow leaf;
And that which should accompany old age,
As honour, love, obedience, troops of friends,
I must not look to have; but, in their stead,
Curses, not loud but deep, *mouth-honour*,[13] breath,

[6] *rogue*
[7] *bloodless, cowardly*
[8] *clown, fool*
[9] *suggest*
[10] *attack*
[11] *will be decisive one way or the other*
[12] *dry.* Cf. the phrase "autumn of life"
[13] i.e. *speeches not from the heart*

Which the poor heart would *fain*[1] deny, and dare not.
Seyton!

Enter SEYTON.

Sey. What 's your gracious pleasure?
Macb. What news more?
Sey. All is confirm'd, my lord, which was reported.
Macb. I'll fight till from my bones my flesh be hack'd.
Give me my armour.
Sey. 'Tis not needed yet.
Macb. I'll put it on.
Send out *moe*[2] horses; *skirr*[3] the country round;
Hang those that talk of fear. Give me mine armour.
How does your patient, doctor?
Doct. Not so sick, my lord,
As she is troubled with *thick-coming*[4] fancies
That keep her from her rest.
Macb. Cure her of that.
Canst thou not minister to a mind diseased,
Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow,
Raze out the written troubles of the brain,
And with some sweet *oblivious*[5] antidote
Cleanse the *stuff'd*[6] bosom of that perilous stuff
Which weighs upon the heart?
Doct. Therein the patient
Must minister to himself.
Macb. Throw physic to the dogs, I'll none of it.
Come, put mine armour on; give me my staff.
Seyton, send out. Doctor, the thanes fly from me.
Come, sir, dispatch. If thou couldst, doctor, *cast*
The water of[7] my land, find *her*[8] disease,
And purge it to a sound and *pristine*[9] health,
I would applaud thee to the very echo,
That should applaud again. *Pull 't off*,[10] I say.

[1] *gladly*
[2] *more*
[3] *scour*
[4] i.e. *that come crowding upon her*
[5] *causing forgetfulness*
[6] *charged, overburdened*
[7] *examine medically*
[8] i.e. *Scotland's*
[9] *L. pristinus, former*
[10] i.e. *his armor.* See ll. 32-5

What rhubarb, senna, or what purgative drug,
Would scour these English hence? Hear'st thou of them?
Doct. Ay, my good lord; your royal preparation
Makes us hear something.
Macb. Bring it after me.
I will not be afraid of death and *bane*,[1]
Till Birnam forest come to Dunsinane. [*Exit.*
Doct. [*Aside.*] Were I from Dunsinane away and clear,
Profit again should hardly draw me here.
[*Exeunt.*

[1] *destruction*

SCENE IV. *Country near Birnam Wood.*

Drum and colours. Enter MALCOLM, *Old* SIWARD *and his Son*, MACDUFF, MENTEITH, CAITHNESS, ANGUS, LENNOX, ROSS, *and Soldiers, marching.*

Mal. Cousins, I hope the days are near at hand
That *chambers*[2] will be safe.
Ment. We doubt it nothing.
Siw. What wood is this before us?
Ment. The wood of Birnam.
Mal. Let every soldier hew him down a bough
And bear 't before him: thereby shall we *shadow*[3]
The numbers of our host, and make *discovery*[4]
Err in report of us.
Sold. It shall be done.
Siw. We learn no other but the confident tyrant
Keeps still in Dunsinane, and will *endure*
Our setting down before 't.[5]
Mal. 'Tis his main hope:
For where *there is advantage to be*[6] given
Both *more and less*[7] have given him the revolt,
And none serve with him but *constrained things*[8]

[2] *our homes*
[3] *conceal*
[4] i.e. *the scouts sent to discover our position and strength*
[5] *suffer us to lay siege to it*
[6] *any opportunity is*
[7] *high and low*
[8] *such as have been forced into service*

Whose hearts are absent too.
Macd. Let our just censures
Attend the true event, and put we on
Industrious soldiership.*
Siw. The time approaches
That will with *due decision*[1] make us know
What we shall say we *have*[2] and what we *owe*.[3]
Thoughts speculative their unsure hopes relate,
But certain issue strokes must arbitrate:†
Towards which advance the war.
[*Exeunt, marching.*

[1]*proper degree of definiteness*
[2]sc. *gained*
[3]*have lost*

Scene V. *Dunsinane. Within the Castle.*

Enter, with drum and colours, Macbeth, Seyton, *and Soldiers.*

Macb. Hang out our banners on the outward walls.
The cry is still, "They come:" our castle's strength
Will laugh a siege to scorn: here let them lie
Till famine and the ague eat them up:
Were they not *forced*[4] with those that should be ours,
We might have met them *dareful*,[5] beard to beard,
And beat them backward home. [*A cry of women within.*] What is that noise?
Sey. It is the cry of women, my good lord.
[*Exit.*
Macb. I have almost forgot the taste of fears.
The time has been, *my senses would have cool'd*[6]
To hear a night-shriek; and my *fell*[7] of hair
Would at a dismal *treatise*[8] *rouse and stir*[9]

[4]*reinforced (by deserters from us)*
[5]*boldly*
[6]*I should have shuddered*
[7]*head*
[8]*story*
[9]*rise and stand*

*We must await the final issue of events ("true event") before we can express our opinions with certainty ("just censures"), and meanwhile let us make all proper military preparations ("put on industrious soldiership").

†Conjectures ("thoughts speculative"), deal with uncertainties: we may *hope* but we cannot be *sure* of anything. The actual result can be decided only by blows.

As[1] life were in 't. I have supp'd full with horrors:
Direness,[2] familiar to my slaughterous thoughts,
Cannot once start me.

Re-enter SEYTON.

Wherefore was that cry?
Sey. The queen, my lord, is dead.
Macb. *She should have died hereafter;*[3]*
There would have been a time for such a word.
To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,
Creeps[4] in *this petty pace*[5] from day to day,
To the last syllable of *recorded time*;[6]
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!
Life 's but a walking shadow, a poor player,
That *struts and frets*[7] his hour upon the stage,
And then is heard no more: it is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.

Enter a Messenger.

Thou comest to use thy tongue; thy story quickly.
Mess. Gracious my lord,
I should report that which I say I saw,
But know not how to do it.
Macb. Well, say, sir.
Mess. As I *did stand my watch*[8] upon the hill,
I look'd toward Birnam, and anon, methought,
The wood began to move.
Macb. Liar and slave!
Mess. Let me endure your wrath if 't be not so:
Within this three mile may you see it coming;
I say, a moving grove.
Macb. If thou speak'st false,
Upon the next tree shalt thou hang alive

[1] *as if*
[2] *horror*
[3] *a later time would have been more fitting*
[4] *creep*
[5] *slowly and unregarded*
[6] *time of which a record may be kept*
[7] *strides theatrically and rages*
[8] *was on guard*

*See p. 178 on which this passage is paraphrased.

Till famine *cling thee:*[1] if thy speech be *sooth,*[2]
I care not if thou dost for me as much.
I *pull in resolution,*[3] and begin
To *doubt the equivocation*[4] of the fiend
That lies like truth: "Fear not, till Birnam wood
Do come to Dunsinane;" and now a wood
Comes toward Dunsinane. Arm, arm, and out!
If this which he avouches *does appear*[5],
There is nor flying hence, nor tarrying here.
I 'gin to be aweary of the sun,
And wish the *estate o' the world*[6] were now undone.
Ring the alarum-bell! Blow, wind! come, *wrack!*[7]
At least we'll die with harness on our back.

[*Exeunt.*

[1] *shrivel thee up*
[2] *truth*
[3] *rein in, or check, my strong confidence*
[4] *suspect the ambiguous language*
[5] *is seen to be true*
[6] *frame of the universe.* Cf. III. ii. 16
[7] *wreck, ruin*

SCENE VI. *Dunsinane. A Plain before the Castle.*

Drum and colours. Enter MALCOLM, *Old* SIWARD, MACDUFF, *etc., and their Army, with boughs.*

Mal. Now, near enough: your *leavy*[8] screens throw down,
And show *like those you are.*[9] You, worthy uncle,
Shall, with my cousin, your right noble son,
Lead our first *battle:*[10] worthy Macduff and we
Shall take upon 's what else remains to do,
According to our *order.*[11]
Siw. Fare you well.
Do we[12] but find the tyrant's power to-night,
Let us be beaten, if we cannot fight.
Macd. Make all our trumpets speak; give them all breath,
Those clamorous *harbingers*[13] of blood and death. [*Exeunt. Alarums continued.*

[8] *leafy*
[9] *yourselves in your true form*
[10] *division, army corps*
[11] *plan, arrangement*
[12] *if we*
[13] *messengers*

SCENE VII. *Another Part of the Field.*

Alarums. Enter MACBETH.

Macb. They have tied me to a stake; I cannot fly,
But, bear-like, I must fight the *course.*[1] What's he
That was not born of woman? Such a one
Am I to fear, or none.

[1] *attack.* See Note V. vii. 1

Enter Young SIWARD.

Yo. Siw. What is thy name?
Macb. Thou'lt be afraid to hear it.
Yo. Siw. No; though thou call'st thyself a hotter name
Than any is in hell.
Macb. My name's Macbeth.
Yo. Siw. The devil himself could not pronounce a title
More hateful to mine ear.
Macb. No, nor more fearful.
Yo. Siw. Thou liest, abhorred tyrant; with my sword
I'll prove *the lie thou speak'st.*[2]
[*They fight, and Young* SIWARD *is slain.*
Macb. Thou wast born of woman.
But swords I smile at, weapons laugh to scorn,
Brandish'd by man that 's of a woman born.
[*Exit.*

[2] *what thou speakest to be a lie*

Alarums. Enter MACDUFF.

Macd. That way the noise is. Tyrant, show thy face!
If thou be'st slain, and with no stroke of mine,
My wife and children's ghosts will haunt me *still.*[3]
I cannot strike at wretched *kerns,*[4] whose arms
Are hired to bear their *staves:*[5] either *thou,*[6] Macbeth,
Or else my sword, with an unbatter'd edge,

[3] *ever*
[4] *infantry*
[5] *lances*
[6] *sc. it must be*

I sheathe again *undeeded.*[1] There thou shouldst be;
By this great clatter, one of greatest note
Seems *bruited.*[2] Let me find him, fortune!
And more I beg not. [*Exit. Alarums.*

[1] *unused, having done no deed*

[2] *announced*

Enter MALCOLM *and Old* SIWARD.

Siw. This way, my lord; the castle's *gently render'd:*[3]
The tyrant's people on both sides do fight;
The noble thanes do bravely in the war;
The day almost itself professes yours,
And little is to do.
Mal. We have met with foes
That *strike beside us.*[4]
Siw. Enter, sir, the castle.
[*Exeunt. Alarums.*

[3] *surrendered without resistance*

[4] i.e. *purposely miss us*

SCENE VIII. *Another Part of the Field.*

Enter MACBETH.

Macb. Why should I play the Roman fool, and die
On mine own sword? Whiles I see *lives,*[5] the gashes
Do better[6] upon them.

[5] *living beings*

[6] *would do better inflicted*

Enter MACDUFF.

Macd. Turn, hell-hound, turn!
Macb. Of all men else I have avoided thee:
But get thee back; my soul is too much charged
With blood of thine already.
Macd. I have no words;
My voice is in my sword: thou bloodier villain
Than terms can *give thee out!*[7] [*They fight.*
Macb. Thou losest labour:
As easy mayst thou the intrenchant air
With thy keen sword impress, as make me bleed:

[7] *express*

Let fall thy blade on vulnerable *crests;*[1]
I bear a charméd life, which must not yield
To one of woman born.
Macd. *Despair*[2] thy charm;
And let the angel, whom thou *still*[3] hast served,
Tell thee, Macduff was from his mother's womb
Untimely[4] ripp'd.
Macb. Accurséd be that tongue that tells me so,
For it hath cow'd my better part of man!
And be these juggling fiends no more believed,
That *palter*[5] with us in a double sense;
That keep the word of promise to our ear,
And break it to our hope. I'll not fight with thee.
Macd. Then yield thee, coward,
And live to be *the show and gaze o' the time:*[6]
We'll have thee, as our rarer monsters are,
Painted[7] upon a pole, and underwrit,
"Here may you see the Tyrant."
Macb. I will not yield,
To kiss the ground before young Malcolm's feet
And to be baited with the rabble's curse.
Though Birnam wood be come to Dunsinane,
And thou opposed, being of no woman born,
Yet I will *try the last:*[8] before my body
I throw my warlike shield: lay on, Macduff,
And damn'd be him that first cries, "Hold, enough!"
[*Exeunt, fighting. Alarums.*

Retreat. Flourish. Re-enter, with drum and colours. MALCOLM, *Old* SIWARD, ROSS, *Thanes and Soldiers.*

Mal. I would the friends we miss were *safe*[9] arrived.
Siw. Some must *go off;*[10] and yet, by these I see,
So great a day as this is cheaply bought.
Mal. Macduff is missing, and your noble son.
Ross. Your son, my Lord, has paid a soldier's debt:

[1] *heads*
[2] *cease to trust*
[3] *always*
[4] *before the natural time*
[5] *equivocate*
[6] *a popular show and exhibition*
[7] *painted and hung*
[8] *make a last effort*
[9] *safely*
[10] i.e. *be lost or killed*

He only lived but till he was a man;
The which no sooner had his *prowess confirm'd*[1]
In the *unshrinking station*[2] where he fought,
But like a man he died.
Siw. Then he is dead?
Ross. Ay, and brought off the field. Your cause of sorrow
Must not be measured by his worth, for then
It *hath*[3] no end.
Siw. Had he his hurts before?
Ross. Ay, on the front.
Siw. Why then, God's soldier be he!
Had I as many sons as I have hairs,
I would not wish them to a fairer death:
And so, his knell is *knoll'd*.[4]
Mal. He 's worth more sorrow,
And that I'll spend for him.
Siw. He 's worth no more:
They say, he *parted*[5] well and paid his *score*:[6]
And so God be with him! Here comes newer comfort.

Re-enter Macduff, *with* Macbeth's *head.*

Macd. Hail, King! for so thou art; behold, where stands
The usurper's cursed head: the *time is free*:[7]
I see thee compass'd with thy kingdom's *pearl*,[8]
That speak my salutation in their minds;*
Whose voices I desire aloud with mine:
Hail, King of Scotland!
All. Hail, King of Scotland!
[*Flourish.*
Mal. We shall not spend a large expense of time,
Before we reckon with your several loves,
And make us even with you. My thanes and kinsmen,
Henceforth be earls, the first that ever Scotland

[1] *courage proved*
[2] *position from which he did not shrink*
[3] *would have*
[4] *tolled*
[5] *died*
[6] *debt (to nature)*
[7] *day of freedom has returned*
[8] *choicest ornament, i.e. the high nobility*

*Who are speaking in their minds the congratulations to which I now give utterance.

In such an honour named. What 's more *to do*,[1]
Which would be planted newly with the time,*
As[2] calling home our exiled friends abroad,
That fled the snares of *watchful*[3] tyranny;
Producing forth the cruel ministers
Of this dead butcher, and his fiend-like queen,
Who, as 'tis thought, by self and violent hands
Took off her life; this, and what needful else
That calls upon us, by the grace of Grace
We will perform in *measure*,[4] time, and place:
So, thanks to all at once and to each one,
Whom we invite to see us crown'd at Scone.
[*Flourish. Exeunt.*

[1] *to be done*
[2] *for example*
[3] *spying*
[4] *proper degree*

*Which we ought now to set to work upon at the beginning of this new era.

NOTES

Act I. Scene I

1. **Three Witches.** The First Witch, personifying the Past, salutes Macbeth as Thane of Glamis; the Second, personifying the Present, hails him as Thane of Cawdor; and the Third, who alone seems able to discern the Future, salutes him as the one "that shalt be king hereafter." (See Introduction, p. 31, "On Witches and Witchcraft.")

8. **Graymalkin.** The name of a cat; the attendant demon of the First Witch. Such spirits were supposed to accompany sorceresses to enable them to perform wonderful feats.

9. **Paddock.** The name of a toad; the attendant of the Second Witch.

10. **Fair is foul.** Coleridge says of the witches: "They are the shadowy, obscure, and fearfully anomalous of physical nature, the lawless of human nature—elemental avengers without sex or kin."

Act I. Scene II

3. **The sergeant.** A sergeant was originally a person of higher rank and social position than is now the case.

12. **The Western Isles.** These are the islands to the west of Scotland, now generally known as the Hebrides.

23. **Cousin.** According to traditional history Duncan and Macbeth were cousins. Shakespeare, however, uses this term loosely for any grade of relationship outside of one's immediate family.

29. **Skipping kerns.** The epithet is appropriate to light-armed infantry; it contains suggestions also of their cowardice.

36. **Cracks.** Explosions, reports.

39. **Golgotha.** The mount on which our Lord was put to death. Literally, the "place of a skull."

47. **Fife.** A maritime county of Scotland, forming the peninsula between the Firths of Forth and Tay.

49. **Norway.** In this line, and in I. iii. 112, *Norway* stands for the King of Norway. See under Sweno, l. 58.

52. **Cawdor.** A small village in Scotland, situated between Inverness and Forres.

53. **Bellona.** ("War-goddess"), Sister of Mars, upon whom she attended. She was a murderous war-goddess, and was worshipped in Rome, Pontus, and Cappadocia.

58. **Sweno.** King of Denmark and Norway, and father of Harold, Sweno, and Canute. He conquered the realm of England and after driving Ethelred into Normandy, placed his own son Harold on the throne.

60. **Saint Colme's Inch.** This island of St. Columba lies in the Firth of Forth, a little to the east of Queensferry.

62. **Thane of Cawdor.** In Holinshed the Thane of Cawdor was condemned for treason after Macbeth's meeting with the Witches.

Act I. Scene III

2. **Killing Swine.** Witches were frequently charged with causing the death of swine and cattle, by casting an evil eye upon them.

7. **Aleppo.** A city of Asiatic Turkey; the emporium of North Syria, on the river Koeik, in a plain sixty miles southeast of Alexandretta. Previous to the great earthquake of 1822 Aleppo contained about one hundred mosques, and was the center of a great import and export trade. It fell into the possession of the Turks in 1517.

7. **Tiger.** The name of a vessel.

17. **Shipman's card.** Either the navigator's chart or the compass card on which the 32 points are marked.

24. **Cannot be lost.** See Introduction, p. 34, ¶ 2 and seq.

38. **So foul,** etc. The resemblance between this line, and line 11 of Scene I is intentional, and suggests a connection between Macbeth's soul and the souls of the Witches, between the tempted and the tempters.

39. **Forres.** A town in the county of Nairn. Forres Castle was the residence of the early Scottish kings.

67. **Get kings.** Beget kings.

71. **Sinel.** Thane of Glamis, husband of Doada, and father of Macbeth.

72. **The Thane of Cawdor lives.** Reference is often made to the seeming contradiction between this statement and that contained in Sc. ii., 62-66. This inconsistency is regard by many commentators as proof that Sc. ii., or at least part of it was not the work of Shakespeare. But the inconsistency is apparent rather than real; for Shakespeare does not state in the earlier scene that Cawdor was actually present at the battle, nor is there anything in previous statements tending to show that Macbeth was at this time aware of the treason of Cawdor or of his condemnation.

128. **Two truths are told.** "Every word of his soliloquy" says Coleridge, "shows the early birth of his guilt. He is all-powerful, without strength; he wishes the end but is irresolute as to the means; conscience distinctly warns him, and he lulls it imperfectly."

129. **Prologues.** The function of the prologue is to give the audience a clearer understanding of the succeeding drama or some of its acts. Thus Macbeth speaks of the two truths which the Witches have already told him as introductions to the more splendid drama, which has for its subject the gaining of a kingdom.

141. **Single state of man.** For the sentiment conveyed in these lines, Cf. *Julius Cæsar* II. i. 67. Single, undivided, united, simple, like the Latin *simplex*. Single state of mind, then—humanity or manhood regarded as a compact whole—as contrasted with the disordered state of man in whom "function is smother'd in surmise." So long as Macbeth's "state of man" is "single," his blood and judgment are properly commingled. Others take "single" to mean feeble, and "state of man" to be "the body politic of man." Another rendering of the phrase is "the kingdom of myself."

Act I. Scene IV

145. **Without my stir.** Macbeth does not long remain in this state of mind.

11. **There's no art.** An example of dramatic irony. Duncan unwittingly applies to the Thane of Cawdor words which the audience naturally transfers to the hero.

39. **Cumberland.** The extreme northwestern county of England. It first became a portion of England in the reign of William II, and was formed by the addition of a portion of the old English kingdom of Yorkshire to the southern part of the old British kingdom of Strathclyde.

42. **Inverness.** The capital of the county of the same name, and chief town in the Highlands of Scotland. Boece makes Inverness the scene of Duncan's murder. Macbeth's castle was at Inverness on "an eminence called the Crown—so called from having been a royal seat." "The whole of the vicinity," says Anderson, "is rich in wild imagery," and answers well to the description of the scene given in I. vi.

Act I. Scene V

1. **They met me.** Note that this letter was written by Macbeth after the battle and his meeting with the Witches, but before his interview with the king. From this we may conclude that he was in constant communication and close sympathy with his wife.

31. **Doth seem.** Lady Macbeth regards the crown as already obtained.

40. **The raven.** In the prophecies of the ancient soothsayers, the cry of the raven was infallibly regarded as an indication of approaching death.

70. **My dispatch.** Lady Macbeth proposes to commit the murder herself.

72. **Solely sovereign sway.** The figure alliteration.

Act I. Scene VI

31. **By your leave.** Duncan here politely offers to conduct Lady Macbeth into the castle.

Act I. Scene VII

20. **Taking off.** To shun the use of the term "murder," Macbeth and Lady Macbeth employ this mild expression.

22. **Cherubim.** (Hebrew plural of "cherub".) In the folios the obsolete plural "cherubin" is used.

43. **A coward.** Lady Macbeth makes a successful appeal to her husband's courage and manhood.

48. **Break this enterprise.** From this it is evident that Macbeth, not his wife, first suggested the assassination.

55. **Sticking-place.** Steevens suggests that the metaphor is taken "*from the screwing-up* the chords of string instruments to their proper degree of tension, when the peg remains fast in its *sticking-place,* i. e. in the place from which it is not to move."

Act II. Scene I

16. **Shut up.** 1. Is wrapped up in; or 2, has concluded or summed up all he has to say in expressing his measureless content.

52. **Hecate.** The name of the queen or mistress of the Witches. In classical mythology she was originally a moon-goddess, representing the moon in its invisible phases. She was supposed to preside over all nocturnal horrors, to haunt tombs and cross-roads in company with the spirits of the dead, and to send nightly phantoms from the lower world.

55. **Tarquin.** Tarquinius Sextus, son of Tarquinius Superbus, the last of the legendary kings of Rome.

58. **The very stones.** Cf. St. Luke XIX:40: "The stones will cry out." Shakespeare probably alludes to this passage.

Act II. Scene II

3. **The fatal bellman.** The Clarendon Press* editors have pointed out that it was customary for the bellman to visit condemned persons on the eve of their execution.

59. **Neptune.** In Roman mythology, the god of the sea, who came to be identified by the Romans themselves with the Greek Poseidon, whose attributes were transferred by the poets to the ancient Roman deity.

Act II. Scene III

5. **Beelzebub.** ("God of flies.") A god of the Philistines who had a famous temple at Ekron. In the New Testament, the prince of evil spirits.

15. **English tailor.** In the Elizabethan Age, it was common for poets to satirize the English practice of imitating foreign fashions.

17. **Roast your goose.** A goose, a tailor's flatiron, so called from the resemblance of its handle to the neck of a goose.

20. **Devil-porter.** Acting as porter to the devil. Observe the unconscious irony.

22. **The primrose way.** The broad way that leads to destruction.

40. **The night has been unruly.** "That danger, death, or preternatural occurrences should be preceded by warnings or intimations, would appear conformable to the idea of a superintending providence, and therefore faith in such omens has been indulged in by almost every nation."—*Drake.*†

54. **The Lord's anointed temple.** This is a metaphor.

58. **Gorgon.** In Greek legend a daughter of Phorcys and Ceto, dwelling in the Western Ocean near Night and Hesperides (or in Libya).

60. **Ring the alarum-bell.** A natural means for bringing in at once the other characters and hurrying the scene forward. Lady Macbeth makes the mistake of coming upon the scene too quickly. This may suggest to the others the after thought that she was not asleep in bed at the time of the murder. Banquo has already told us that he has lately been struggling against the temptations that beset him in his sleep; hence, it is natural that he should speedily arrive upon the scene. Malcolm and Donalbain, who occupy the chamber adjoining that of the king,

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* Clarendon Press. A printing establishment in Oxford, England, in which the university has the preponderating influence. It was founded partly with profits from the copyright of Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion.*

† See footnote, p. 25.

are evidently asleep when the bell rings, and are the last to respond to its summons.

104. **Help me hence.** There is no obvious reason for suspecting that Lady Macbeth's swoon is not genuine. Macbeth in the excitement of the moment, and borne up by the necessity of acting, is able to paint the picture of Duncan with "his silver skin laced with golden blood," and by his side the "murderers steep'd in the colours of their trade;" but Lady Macbeth has reached the limit of her endurance. Her strength lies in her power to resist the horrible and painful thoughts that occasionally seek entrance to her mind; but when Macbeth sketches the gruesome picture of the murdered Duncan her strength gives way and she faints.

Act II. Scene IV

26. **Stol'n away and fled.** The flight of the king's sons is one of the several incidents which contribute toward the success of Macbeth's schemes during the first half of the play.

31. **Scone.** The ancient royal city of Scotland. The place of coronation. The present Scone Palace, a modern building, is a seat of the Earl of Mansfield.

33. **Colme-kill.** The word means "the cell or chapel of St. Columba, who landed on this island (better known as Iona) in 563 to preach Christianity. The Scottish kings were buried there.

Act III. Scene I

56. **Cæsar.** Octavius Cæsar, afterwards the Emperor Augustus.

87. **Are you so gospell'd.** This seems to be a reference to the Sermon on the Mount.

129. **The perfect spy o' the time.** Some editors think that "perfect spy" refers to the Third Murderer who later joins the other two. Preferably, however, "perfect spy" means the result of "perfect spying or observation."

Act III. Scene II

38. **Nature's copy.** Some editors take this to mean "man formed in the image of God;" but it is more likely to be simply an example of Shakespeare's knowledge of legal phraseology.

41. **Black Hecate's summons.** See Note, III. v. 1.

49. **That great bond.** "The bond by which Banquo and his son Fleance hold their tenure of life."

52. **Good things.** See the quotation from Professor Dowden, on p. 26.

Act III. Scene III

Third Murderer. Some critics assert that this was Macbeth in disguise. It may be that he was suspicious of the two murderers, and to "make assurance double sure" of Banquo's death, was present himself.

7. **Timely.** (1) Soon attained; (2) welcome; or, (3) in time.

Act III. Scene IV

27. **Twenty trenched gashes.** Cf. the "twenty mortal murders" of line 82. Sherman takes this "unsightly mutilation" as evidence that the Third Murderer was Macbeth himself.

Enter the ghost of Banquo and sits (stage dir.). Did Shakespeare intend that Banquo's ghost should be exhibited to the audience? The point has long been doubted, some maintaining that the appearance of the ghost was necessary for stage effect; others claiming that no such appearance would be required to influence the audience, so long as they perceived the effect of the apparition on Macbeth.

102. **Hyrcan.** An adjective formed from Hyrcania, a region in Asia, which bordered on the Caspian Sea, and the Oxus. It corresponded in part to northern and northeastern Persia.

123. **Blood will have blood.** It was believed by many in Shakespeare's time that a murdered body bled upon the approach or touch of the murderer.

124. **Trees to speak.** Like the tree in Virgil's *Æneid*, III, that bled and revealed to Æneas the murderer of Polydorus.

134. **To the weird sisters.** Macbeth's seeking the Witches, who at first sought him, is a proof that he has fallen from grace.

142. **You lack.** "In the moment of crisis Lady Macbeth had used roughness to rouse her husband; when the courtiers are gone she is all tenderness. She utters not a word of reproach; perhaps she is herself exhausted by the strain she has gone through; more probably the womanly solicitude for the physical sufferer thinks only how to procure for her husband 'the season of all natures, sleep.' "—*Moulton.**

Act III. Scene V

1. **Hecate.** Upon the introduction of Christianity into Greece, the old classical deities were lowered to the positions of demons. Hecate, who under the old system had reigned supreme in the nether regions,

* See footnote, p. 44.

under the new, was invested with a preëminently diabolic character, and so she came to be regarded as the patroness of sorcery and witchcraft.

15. **Acheron.** In classical mythology, a river in Hades, and later, in the Lower World in general.

Act III. Scene VI

1. **My former speeches.** "Under the bitter irony of this speech," says Moulton,* "we can see clearly enough that Macbeth has been exposed by a series of suspicious acts; he has done all things well; and in particular by peculiar resemblances between this last incident of Banquo and Fleance and the previous incident of Duncan and his son. It appears then that Macbeth's last successful crime proves the means by which retribution overtakes all his other crimes; the latter half of the play is needed to develop the steps of the retribution, but, in substance, Macbeth's fall is latent in the final step of his rise."

27. **Most pious Edward.** From Holinshed we learn that "Saint Edward . . . received Malcolme by way of most friendlie entertainment."

Act IV. Scene I

3. **Harpier.** Very likely the term "Harpier" is a corruption of harpy, a monster of ancient mythology, with the face of a woman and the body of a bird of prey. In classical mythology the harpy symbolizes cruelty and deceit.

16. **Blind-worm's sting.** The belief still exists in many countries that the blind-worm is venomous.

23. **Mummy.** At one time mummy was used for medicinal purposes.

29. **Tartar.** A term usually applied to certain roving tribes which inhabited the steppes of Central Asia.

93. **Birnam.** Birnam Hill, northeast of Perth, about twelve miles from Dunsinane.

Dunsinane. One of the Sidlaw hills of Scotland, altitude 1,012 feet.

Eight Kings. (Stage dir.) James I. of England and his ancestors.

121. **Two-fold balls and treble sceptres.** The "two-fold balls" refer to King James' double coronation, first at Stirling, and afterwards at Westminster. The "treble sceptres" symbolize the three kingdoms of England and Wales, Scotland, and Ireland (or possibly Great Britain, France, and Ireland).

130. **Antic round.** According to Ben Jonson, the witches' manner of dancing was: "They at their meetings do all things contrary to

* See footnote, p. 44.

the custom of men, dancing back to back, and hip to hip, their hands joined, and making their circles backward, to the left hand, with strange fantastic motions of their heads and bodies.''

Act IV. Scene II

Macduff's Castle. (Stage dir.) ''On the Fifeshire Coast, about three miles from Dysart, stand two quadrangular towers, supposed to be the ruins of Macduff's Castle.''—*Knight.**

17. **I dare not.** Very likely Ross means that he dare not yet make known the plans of himself, Macduff, and others.

Act IV. Scene III

34. **The title is affeer'd.** The original text reads as follows: ''The title is affear'd,'' and the explanation of the passage, if this reading be accepted, will be, ''Malcolm, personifying the regal title, is afeard,'' i. e. afraid to claim what rightly belongs to him.

128. **Chance of goodness.** *Goodness* here means ''virtue.''

138. **The evil.** Scrofula was formerly known in England as ''King's evil,'' from the belief that the touch of a sovereign could effect a cure. Shakespeare may have found authority for the passage in Holinshed's description of Edward the Confessor, who ''was enspired with the *gift of Prophecie,*'' and who ''used to help those that were vexed with the disease commonly called the Kyng's evill, and left that vertue as it were a portion of inheritance unto his successors the Kings of the Realme.''

145. **A golden stamp.** Heny VII. introduced the practice of presenting the person touched, with a small gold or silver coin, called a touch-piece.

188. **Fee-grief.** In English law *fee* means an ''estate descendable to the heirs of the guarantee so long as there are any in existence.'' Fee-grief is an estate which ''belongs to the holder and to him alone.''

208. **He has no children.** Many critics think that this refers to Macbeth, in which case Macduff is lamenting that he is unable to inflict punishment upon the tyrant which will be in proportion to his own suffering. But more probably these words are Macduff's reply to Malcolm's speech immediately preceding. It is as though Macduff were to say, ''It is easy for you who have no children, to talk of comfort and of curing this deadly grief.''

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* See footnote, p. 26.

Act V. Scene I

57. **Arabia.** A vast peninsula, southwest of Asia. It is famous for its many aromatic spices.

65. **This disease is beyond my practice.** In the Middle Ages very little attention was paid to the treatment of insanity. It was not until about 1750 that the condition of the insane began to attract attention in England.

Act V. Scene III

8. **Epicures.** During the reign of James I. intemperance in eating and drinking was a characteristic of the English people.

14. **Patch.** A clown: so called from his multi-colored, or motley dress.

23. **Old age.** These lines contain the only suggestion conveyed by Shakespeare of any considerable lapse of time since the opening scene of the play. In Holinshed, Macbeth's reign extended from A. D. 1040 to A. D. 1057.

Act V. Scene IV

18. **Shall.** The word has here no future significance, but is used out of courtesy to Malcolm, and has the sense of "may."

Act V. Scene V

8. **The cry of women.** This is, of course, the cry made by the servants of Lady Macbeth, when they discover the death of the queen.

17. **She should have died hereafter.** We are not to understand from this line and the next, that Macbeth has lost his love for his wife. But we should rather see in them an intimation of the feeling within him that his own death is approaching. "She could not live after his death, and his own 'hour upon the stage' is almost ended. But she might have waited for him."

Act V. Scene VI

2. **Worthy uncle.** Siward, Earl of Northumberland.

Act V. Scene VII

1. **Tied me to a stake.** The metaphor is from the barbarous sport of bear baiting, a popular diversion in the time of Elizabeth.

29. **Strike beside us.** This might mean "fight on our side," referring to the deserters from Macbeth's army.

Act V. Scene VIII

1. **The Roman fool.** Cato, Brutus, Cassius, Antony, and many other characters in, or alluded to in Shakespeare's Roman plays, died by their own hands. At certain periods in the history of Rome it was considered a virtue to avoid death or defeat by committing suicide.

14. **Angel.** The word was at one time used in a bad as well as in a good sense.

54. **Hail, King!** Holinshed relates that Macbeth "was slaine in yeere of the incarnation, 1057, and in the 16 yeare of King Edward's reigne ower the Englishmen."

GRAMMATICAL NOTES

On reading the works of Elizabethan authors we wonder at the many points of difference in grammar and meaning between their English and the English of today. Yet, there is really no cause for surprise. The great "renascence" had just taken place, and the ancient classics were being studied in England as they had never before been studied. Changes in structure and meaning in the language of Chaucer were demanded and introduced, but as old prejudices die hard the result for a time was chaos. Neither the devotees of the old forms nor the advocates of the new would give way, so both reigned, but neither was supreme. Language is given to interpret thought, and the result of the conflict between the old and the new was a language clear in thought but doubtful in expression. Such must be the conditions in all transitional periods. Hence, though the Elizabethan English differs in many respects from the English of today, it was and is intelligible. The change from the old forms through the Elizabethan English to our present forms was slow indeed, but changes that are to endure are not wrought in a generation.

In this may be found the *raison d'être* of the so-called grammatical difficulties of Shakespeare. Besides, in those days printed books were less common than they are now, and even today spoken language is frequently less grammatical than that which is written.

Adjectives Used as Adverbs

Duncan hath borne his faculties so *meek* (I. vii. 17). Meekly.
Who dares receive it *other* (I. vii. 70). Otherwise.
Which else should *free* have wrought (II. i. 19). Freely.
Which the false man does *easy* (II. iii. 123). Easily.
Lest our old robes sit *easier* than our new (II. iv. 38). More easily.
Things *bad* begun make strong themselves by ill (III. ii. 55). Badly.
But yet I'll make assurance *double* sure (IV. i. 83). Doubly.
As *easy* mayst thou the intrenchant air (V. viii. 9). Easily.
I would the friends we miss were *safe* arrived (V. viii. 35). Safely.

Adjectives Used as Nouns

All that impedes thee from the golden *round* (I. v. 30). Crown.
The blanket of the *dark* (I. v. 55). Darkness.

Those sleepy *two* (I. vii. 68). That sleepy pair.
Against my *near'st* of life (III. i. 117). Inmost part.
Protest their *first* of manhood (V. ii. 11). First proof.

Adjectives Transposed

That seems to speak things *strange* (I. ii. 46).
I have seen hours *dreadful* and things *strange* (II. iv. 2).
To the direction *just* (III. iii. 4).
Days and nights has *thirty one* (IV. i. 7).
Gracious *my* lord (V. v. 30).
Canst thou not minister to a mind *diseased* (V. iii. 39).

Double Comparative

Lesser than Macbeth and greater (I. iii. 65). See V. ii. 13.

Nouns and Pronouns Used as Adverbs

That, trusted *home* (I. iii. 121).
All-thing unbecoming (III. i. 13).
Something from the palace (III. i. 131).
We doubt it *nothing* (V. iv. 2).
Beat them backward *home* (V. v. 7)

Adverbs Used as Adjectives

Before thy *here*-approach (IV. iii. 125).
Since my *here*-remain in England (IV. iii. 140).

Double Negative

Nor must be known *no* less to have done so (I. iv. 31).
Tongue, *nor* heart *cannot* conceive nor name thee (II. iii. 51).
Who *cannot want* the thought (III. vi. 8). *Want* means "not have."

Omission of the Indefinite Article

Surveying (an) vantage (I. ii. 30).
Were (a) poor and single business (I. vi. 16).
As if it . . . yell'd out like (a) syllable of dolour (IV. iii. 7).
Here, from gracious England have I (an) offer (IV. iii. 43).

Omission of the Definite Article

Let us speak our free hearts each to (the) (I. iii. 156).
Never shall (the) sun that morrow see (I. v. 63).

We have lost (the) best half of our affair (III. iii. 22).
I'll catch it ere it come to (the) ground (III. v. 25)

Insertion of the Indefinite Article

Their drenchéd natures lie as in *a* death (I. vii. 63).
There's not *a* one of them (III. iv. 132).

Omission of the Conjunction *If*

As *'twere* a careless trifle (I. iv. 11).
Who, *were't* so, would have informed (I. v. 34).
As they had seen me with these hangman's hands (II. ii. 27).
Go not my horse the better (III. i. 25).
I am so much a fool, *should* I stay longer (IV. ii. 28).

Abstract Nouns Used in the Plural

This sore night hath trifled former *knowings* (II. iv. 3).
Whose *loves* I may not drop (III. i. 121).
Let not my *jealousies* be your dishonours (IV. iii. 29).
The *taints* and *blames* I laid upon myself (IV. iii. 117).
Revenges burn in them (V. ii. 3).
Before we reckon with your several *loves* (V. viii. 61).

Abstract for Concrete

Art thou not, fatal *vision,* sensible to feeling (II. i. 36).
Listening their *fear* (II. ii. 28).
The *expedition* of my violent love (II. iii. 96).
And when we have our naked *frailties* hid (II. iii. 112).
Filling their hearers with strange *invention* (III. i. 32).
Time, thou anticipatest my dread exploits (IV. i. 144).

Nouns as Adjectives

Our *bosom* interest (I. ii. 63).
The *primrose* way (II. iii. 22).
You secret, black, and *midnight* hags (IV. i. 47).
Where gott'st thou that *goose* look (V. iii. 11).
Those *linen* cheeks of thine (V. iii. 15).

Nouns as Verbs

Their hands and faces were all *badged* with blood (II. iii. 88).
Uproar the universal peace (IV. iii. 92).
To *dew* the sovereign flower (V. ii. 30).
I sheath again *undeeded* (V. vii. 20).

Prepositions Frequently Interchanged

The merciless Macdonwald . . . *of* kerns and gallowglasses is supplied (I. ii. 9). With.

Have we eaten *on* the insane root (I. iii. 84). Of.

In his commendations I am fed (I. iv. 55). On.

These deeds must not be thought *after these ways* (II. ii. 33). In this way.

Which *in* his death were perfect (III. i. 107). On or with.

Weary with disasters, tugg'd *with* fortune (III. i. 111). By.

I must not *for* certain friends (III. i. 120). On account of.

Pity *for* mischance (III. iv. 43). On account of.

Impostors *to* true fear (III. iv. 64). Compared with.

Is received *of* the most pious Edward (III. vi. 27). By.

With worms and flies (IV. ii. 32). On.

They were all struck *for* thee (IV. iii. 217). On account of.

Shall e'er have power *upon* thee (V. iii. 7). Over.

Forced *with* those that should be ours (V. v. 5). Reinforced by.

Supp'd full *with* horrors (V. v. 13). On.

Pronouns Interchanged ("His" for *Its*)

Wither'd murder, alarum'd by *his* sentinel, the wolf (II. i. 53).

Treason has done *his* worst (III. ii. 24).

Bid the tree unfix *his* earth-bound root (IV. i. 95).

Personal Pronouns Used Reflexively

Pall *thee* in the dunnest smoke (I. v. 53).

And address'd *them* again to sleep (II. ii. 24).

Hold *thee* still (III. ii. 54).

Let every soldier hew *him* down a bough (V. iv. 4).

Then yield *thee,* coward (V. viii. 23).

Before we . . . make *us* even with you (V. viii. 62).

Omission of the Relative Pronoun

And the very ports (on which) they blow (I. iii. 15).

There's one (who) did laugh in's sleep (II. ii. 22).

Who was't (who) came by (IV. i. 140).

Than any (that) is in hell (V. vii. 7).

Those (whom) he commands move only in command (V. ii. 19).

"Which" for *Who*

The slave; *which* ne'er shook hands (I. ii. 20).
It was he, in the times past, *which* held you (III. i. 76).
I have known those *which* have walked in their sleep (V. i. 66).

"Who" for *Whom*

Who I myself struck down (III. i. 122).
Who may I rather challenge for unkindness (III. iv. 42).
The dead man's knell is there scarce asked for *who* (IV. iii. 163).

Omission of Antecedent

Who was the thane, lives yet (I. iii. 109).
Who dares do more, is none (I. vii. 47).
And hums, as who should say (III. vi. 42).
But who knows nothing (IV. iii. 159).

"The Which" for *Which*

To *the which* my duties (III. i. 16).
The which no sooner had his prowess confirm'd (V. viii. 41).

Archaic Participial Verb Forms

He shall live a man *forbid* (I. iii. 21).
I have *spoke* (I. iv. 3). See IV. iii. 11, and V. i. 53.
His great love hath *holp* him (I. vi. 23).
Hath so *exasperate* the king (III. vi. 38).
Grease that's *sweaten* (IV. i. 64).
The flighty purpose never is *o'ertook* (IV. i. 145).
I have almost *forgot* the taste of fears (V. v. 9).
Painted upon a pole and *underwrit* (V. viii. 26).

"Be" for *Are*

And *be* all traitors that do so (IV. ii. 48).

A Form of "Be" for *Have*

Whether he *was* combined with those of Norway (I. iii. 111).
Are not those in commission yet returned (I. iv. 1).
They *are* not yet come back (I. iv. 3).
The king's two sons *are* stol'n away and fled (II. iv. 26).

Fleance *is* 'scaped (III. iv. 20).
I *am* in blood stepp'd in so far (III. iv. 137).
Macduff *is* fled to England (IV. i. 142).
I would the friends we miss *were* safe arrived (V. viii. 35).

Intransitive Verbs Used Transitively

Listening their fear (II. ii. 28).
I have almost *slipp'd* the hour (II. iii. 33).
Palaces and pyramids do *slope* their heads (IV. i. 56).
To make him *fly* the land (IV. ii. 1).
Wretched souls that *stay* his cure (IV. iii. 133).
Sundry blessings that *speak* him full of grace (IV. iii. 151).
Each minute *teems* a new one (IV. iii. 168).
Hang alive till famine *cling* thee (V. v. 40).
Despair thy charm (V. viii. 13).

"May" for *Can*, "Might" for *Could*

We *might* have met them dareful (V. v. 6).
Within this three mile *may* you see it coming (V. v. 37).
As easy *mayst* thou the intrenchant air with thy keen sword impress (V. viii. 9).

Omission of Verb

Let us toward the king (I. iii. 153). Supply *go.*
Good repose the while (II. i. 29). Supply *may you have.*
Well contented (II. iii. 120). Supply *we are.*
The near in blood, the nearer bloody (II. iii. 126). Supply *a man is.*
Therefore to horse (II. iii. 129). Supply *let us get.*
And wisdom to offer up a weak poor innocent lamb (IV. iii. 15). Supply *it may be.*
I'll none of it (V. iii. 46). Supply *have.*
Thy story quickly (V. v. 29). Supply *tell.*

"Shall" and "Should" for *Will* and *Would*

So *should* he look (I. ii. 45).
Do you not hope your children *shall* be kings (I. iii. 119).
We love him highly, and *shall* continue our graces (I. vi. 30).
Whereto the rather *shall* his day's hard journey soundly invite him (I. vii. 57).
You *shall* offend him (III. iv. 57).
They *should* find what 'twere to kill a father (III. vi. 19).

Singular Verb with Plural Subject

Time and the hour *runs* through the roughest day (I. iii. 148).
The service and the loyalty I owe *pays* itself (I. iv. 23).
Fate and metaphysical aid *doth* seem (I. v. 31).
What *is* your tidings (I. v. 33).
Words to the heat of deeds too cool breath *gives* (II. i. 61).
Renown and grace *is* dead (II. iii. 80).
The mere lees *is* left this vault to brag of (II. iii. 82).
There*'s* daggers in men's smiles (II. iii. 126).
'T*is* two or three that bring you word (IV. i. 141).
The means that *makes* us strangers (IV. iii. 156).
There *is* ten thousand (V. iii. 12).

VERSIFICATION

The ordinary line in blank verse consists of five feet of two syllables each, the second syllable in each foot being accented.

The Kin'g | hath ha'p | pil'y | recei'ved, | Macbe'th,
The ne'ws | of th'y | succe'ss; | and wh'en | he re'ads
Thy pe'rs | (o)nal ve'n | ture i'n | the re'b | els' fi'ght,
His wo'n | ders an'd | his pra'is | es do' | conte'nd. I. iii. 89.

But as this line is too monotonous and formal for frequent use, the meter is varied, sometimes by changing the position of the accent, and sometimes by introducing trisyllabic and monosyllabic feet. It must not be thought that all accented syllables receive the same stress. In lines quoted above the syllables *ly* in (1), *thy* in (2), *in* in (3), *and* in (4) are defective in accent, i. e., are feebly stressed.

The position of the accent is frequently changed. The inversion of the accent (trochee) is most frequent at the beginning of a line, but it occurs also, not uncommonly, after a pause in another part of the line.

Mor'e is | thy du'e | than mo're | than a'll | can pa'y. I. iv. 21.
An'gels | are br'ight | still, thou'gh | the brig'ht | est fell. IV. iii. 22.

The trochee after a stop in the middle of a line is seen in—

No't cast | asi'de | so so'on. | *Wa's* the | hope dru'nk. I. vii. 35.
Fee'd and | rega'rd | him no't. | *Ar'e you* | a man? III. iv. 58.

The trochee is occasionally found, not following a pause.

The ey'e | *wi'nk at* | the han'd | yet le't | that b'e. I. iv. 52.

An extra syllable is frequently added before a pause, especially at the end of a line.

But the | Norwey | an lord, | survey | ing vant | *age*. I. ii. 30.
Is this | a dag | ger which | I see | before | *me?* II. i. 33.

In twenty-five lines in *Macbeth* the superfluous syllable occurs after the second foot, e. g.:

Give me | the dag | *gers:* | the sleep | ing and | the dead. II. ii. 52.

In thirty-two it occurs after the third foot, e. g.:

Wake Dun | can with | thy knock | *ing!* | I would | thou couldst! II. ii. 73.
To plague | the inven | *tor:* | this ev | en-hand | ed just | *ice.* I. vii. 10.

Such extra syllables are called *double* (or *feminine*) endings, and they afford a useful indication of the approximate date of the play. Speaking generally, if the double endings are rare (e. g. 9 in *Love's Labour's Lost*, 1588) we may infer that the play is of early date; if frequent, that the play belongs to Shakespeare's later period (e. g. 726 in *Cymbeline*, 1610-12). In *Macbeth* there are, according to Mr. Fleay, 399 lines with feminine endings.

Two extra syllables are sometimes allowed, if unemphatic, before a pause, especially at the end of a line, thus giving the appearance of an Alexandrine.

And last | the hear | ty wel | come. Thanks | t(o) your ma | *jesty.* III. iv. 2.

Unaccented monosyllables. Provided there be only one accented syllable there may be more than two syllables in any foot, e. g.:

What a haste | looks through | his eyes! | So should | he look. I. ii. 45.

Accented monosyllables. Sometimes an unemphatic monosyllable (such as *a, and, at, for, in, of, the, to*) is allowed to stand in an emphatic place, and to receive an accent. When it occurs at the end of the line it is called a "weak ending." Weak endings appear for the first time in considerable numbers in *Macbeth*, and hardly at all in Shakespeare's earlier plays.

He hath | been *in* | unus | ual | pleas | ure *and.* II. i. 13.

Syllables slurred or omitted. Many syllables which we now pronounce might formerly be omitted in pronunciation. Many lines apparently irregular may be reduced to regularity on this principle of slurring, e. g.: if we contract "God be with you" into the familiar *good-bye* we are able to scan.

Till sup | per time | alone: | while then | God be with you. III. i. 43.

The commonest elisions are *'d* for ed, *'s* for is or for us, or for his, *st* for est, *'ll* for will, *'ld* for would, *'lt* for wilt, *'rt* for art, *'t* for it or for to, *o'er* for over, *ei'r* for either, *whe'r* for whether, *o'* for of, *i'* for in, *th'* for thee. Other words occurring in the play, in which a vowel sound must be slurred or elided, are *cer'mony, warr'nted, nour'sher, tyr'nny, ver'ty, corp'ral, discov'ry, temp'rance, persev'rance, gen'ral, moment'ry, conf'rence, ev'ry, murd'rous,* etc. See Mayor's "English Metre," (156-9).

Lengthening of words. Many words are given an additional syllable in pronunciation, e. g.:

The new | est state. | This is | the ser | *ge-ant.* I. ii. 3.
Let your | remem | b-*e*-rance | apply | to Ban(quo). III. ii. 30.

The termination *-ion* is frequently pronounced as two syllables, e. g.:

Which smoked | with blood | y ex | ecu | *tion.* I. ii. 17.

The *ed* of past participles is frequently pronounced as a separate syllable even where the *e* is usually mute. As such words are accented in the text, the student will readily find examples.

Monosyllables are drawn out in pronounciation so as to serve as a foot, or are pronounced as dissyllables. This generally happens where the letter *r* follows a long vowel, e. g.:

Smells woo | ingly | *he-re:* | no jut | ty, frieze. I. vi. 6.
I dreamt | last night | of the | three *we* | *ird* sist | ers. II. i. 20.

Alexandrines containing six pronounced accents are rare in Shakespeare, and are most commonly found in lines divided between different speakers.

The vict | (o)ry fell | on us. | Great hap | piness! | That now. I. ii. 57.
And she | goes down | at twelve. | I tak(e) (i)t, | 'tis lat | er, sir. II. i. 3.

An Alexandrine is occasionally found with a feminine ending.

The queen | my lord | is dead. | She should | have died | here af | *ter.* V. v. 16.

The number of lines which might be taken as Alexandrines is unusually large in *Macbeth.* But many of these are only:

Apparent Alexandrines, which can be reduced to five-foot lines by the omission of unemphatic syllables.

I'll come | t(o) yo(u) anon. | We are | resolved | my lord. III. i. 138.
Put on | th(eir) inst(ru)ments. | Receive | what cheer | you may. IV. iii. 231.
The num | bers of | our host | and make | discov(e)ry. V. iv. 6.

Short lines. The number of short lines in *Macbeth* is exceptionally great, and may be due, as many editors think, to corruption in the text. We find single lines containing only four, three, or even two accents. The verse with four accents is often used, with rhyme "when witches or other extraordinary beings are introduced as speaking."—*Abbott.**

* Abbott, Edwin, born at London, 1838. An English clergyman and educator.

Do'uble, | do'uble | to'il and | tro'uble,
Fi're | bu'rn and | ca'uldron | bu'bble. IV. i. 20.

Single lines with three or two accents are most frequent at the beginning and end of a speech.

As thi's | which no'w | I draw. II. i. 41.
Shall har'm | Macb'eth. IV. i. 81.

The pause in such cases may usually be filled up with action, and is sometimes to be explained by the haste or excitement of the speaker.

Proper names. The same name is not always pronounced in the same way in Shakespeare; thus *Glamis* appears to be a monosyllable in I. iii. 116. Where it occurs at the end of a line, as in I. iii. 48, 71, it may be pronounced as either a monosyllable or a dissyllable. Elsewhere it is a dissyllable.

Dunsinane has the proper Scotch pronunciation, i. e. is accented on the second syllable in IV. i. 93. Elsewhere it is accented on the third syllable.

Hecate, contrary to classical usage, is pronounced as a dissyllable.

Macbeth is accented on the first syllable in IV. i. 126, as is also *Macduff* in III. vi. 39.

Accent. Many words are accented otherwise than at present.

And cha's | tise with | the val | our of | my tongue. I. v. 29.

So we find also acce'ss, I. v. 46; pu'rveyor, I. vi. 22; o'bscure, II. iii. 45; ma'nkind, II. iv. 18; ba'boon, IV. i. 36; co'njure, IV. i. 49; sometime', IV. ii. 76; perse'verance, IV. iii. 86; almo'st, V. v. 9, V. vii. 27.

Rhyme. For a play written as late as *Macbeth* is supposed to have been (1606), the proportion of rhyming lines is large. Most of these, however, are introduced with a special purpose. Thus the Witches generally speak in rhyme that the language of the supernatural beings may differ from that of the ordinary characters of the play. In other cases rhyme occurs most frequently at the end of a scene, to indicate—in the absence of scenery and a drop-curtain—that the scene is concluded. At other times rhyme is employed by Shakespeare (1) to convey general moralizing reflections, and (2) to denote a climax, especially at the end of a speech. The meter of most of the rhyming couplets used by the Witches is trochaic, and is often truncated (i. e. it lacks a final, unstressed syllable), but we frequently find iambic lines interspersed with the trochaic, e. g.:

Thri'ce to | thi'ne, and | thri'ce to | mi'ne,
And thri'ce | agai'n, | to ma'ke | up ni'ne. I. iii. 35.

The speech of Hecate, III. v., is iambic throughout.

And you' | all kno'w | secu'r | ity
Is mor' | tals' chi'ef | est e'n | emy'. III. v. 32.

Prose is used in comic and domestic scenes where it is desired to lower the dramatic pitch, as in II. iii., IV. ii., and V. i. It is also used for letters, as in I. v.

Meter as an indication of date. To the most casual reader of the play it will be evident that *Macbeth* contains a large proportion of irregular lines. From the irregularities it may be inferred that the play does not belong to Shakespeare's early period of composition.

A comparison of the play with other plays of known date belonging to earlier and later periods reveals the following facts. The figures are taken from Fleay's Shakespeare Manual.

	Date Rhymed	Measures	Feminine or Double Endings	Lines of Fewer or More Than Five Feet	Number of Lines
1st Period, *Richard II*.....	1593–4	537	148	99	2641
2d Period, *Henry V*.....	1599	101	291	52	3320
3d Period, *Macbeth*.....	1606	118	399	105	1993
Tempest.....	1610	2	476	81	2068
4th Period, *Cymbeline*.....	1610–12	...	726	116	3448

The large proportion of short lines may be due to the fact that we possess the play in a mutilated form. It is also thought that many of the rhyme-tags which occur at the ends of scenes are the work of another than Shakespeare. If these possibilities be taken into consideration, then the metrical test will lead us to the same conclusion, with respect to the date, as that at which we arrived upon other grounds (Introduction, p. 21-24), viz., that the play was composed in the year 1606.

VARIANTS AND PROPOSED EMENDATIONS.

A few only of the more important are given. Other readings will be found in the Clarendon Press edition, to which we have occasionally referred.

I. ii. 20-1. For *which* Pope reads *who,* Capell *and.* For *shook hand, slack'd hands* has been suggested.

I. iii. 15. For *very,* Johnson conjectured *various;* for *ports,* Pope reads *points.*

I. iii. 97. *Hail* and *came* are Rowe's emendations for *tale* and *can.*

I. vi. 4. *Martlet* is Rowe's emendation of *Bartlet.*

I. vi. 5. *Mansionry* is Theobald's emendation of *mansonry.* Pope suggested *masonry.*

I. vii. 6. *Shoal* is Theobald's emendation of *school.*

I. vii. 47. *Do more* is Rowe's emendation of *no more.* For *beast* Collier suggests *boast.*

II. i. 14. For *offices* Rowe proposed *officers.*

II. i. 51. For *sleep* various commentators have proposed *sleeper.*

II. i. 55. *Strides* is Pope's emendation of *sides.*

II. i. 57. *Way they walk* is Rowe's emendation of *they may walk.*

III. i. 129. *With the perfect spy o' the time.* Johnson changed *the* to *a;* Tyrwhitt proposed *the perfect spot, the time;* Collier, *Acquaint you with a perfect spy, o' the time.* The Clarendon Press edition, *the perfect'st spy,* or *the perfect'st eye.*

III. ii. 20. *Gain our peace.* So the First folio. The Second folio, followed by Dyce, Singer, and Staunton, print *place.*

III. iv. 106. *If trembling I inhabit.* Pope read *inhibit;* Theobald, *me inhibit;* Pope, *I inhibit thee.* Other conjectures are *I exhibit* and *I inherit* and *I inhabit here.*

IV. i. 97. *Rebellion's head* is Theobald's conjecture for *Rebellion's dead.* Another suggestion is *Rebellious dead.*

IV. ii. 22. *Each way and move.* Theobald proposed *Each way and wave;* Steevens, *And each way move;* Staunton *Each sway and move;* Daniels, *Each way it moves.*

IV. ii. 83. *Shag-hair'd* is Steevens' emendation of *shag-ear'd.*

IV. iii. 15. *Deserve* is Warburton's emendation of *discerne.* For *and wisdom* Hammer reads *'tis wisdom;* Staunton, *and wisdom 'tis* or *and wisdom bids.* The Clarendon Press edition suggests that a whole line may here have dropped out.

V. i. 29. *Is shut,* Rowe's emendation of *are shut.*

V. iii. 20. Steevens first put *disseat for dis-eate.* The Second folio reads *disease.* Bishop Percy suggested *chair* for *cheer.*

V. iii. 21. For *way of life* Johnson proposed *May of life.*

V. iii. 43. *Stuff'd . . . stuff.* "Pope read *full* for *stuff'd.* Others have conjectured *foul, clogg'd, fraught, press'd.* Others retaining *stuff'd* would alter *stuff* to *grief,* or *matter,* or *slough,* or *freight.*"—Clarendon Press Edition.

CAUTIONS AND HINTS FOR PARAPHRASING

1. Do not mistake the meaning of "to paraphrase." It is not to put into *other words* the words of a passage, but to put into *your own words* the meaning of that passage.

2. Read, several times, the passage to be paraphrased, and be quite sure you have seized the general sense before attempting to write anything.

3. Put nothing down of which you do not know the meaning. If you do not understand what you write you may be sure no one else will.

4. If you use a dictionary (to be avoided as much as possible) make sure you understand the meaning selected for any given word, and that it "fits in" with the rest of your rendering.

5. It is better to write nothing than to put down unintelligible rubbish.

6. In paraphrasing poetry or condensed prose (such as Bacon's) it is generally necessary to amplify in order to bring out the full meaning, i. e. your version ought to be longer than the original.

7. Do not turn into the third person what has been expressed in the first person, and especially do not change from the one to the other without good reason.

8. Change the order of words, or even sentences, as much as you please so long as you preserve the meaning of the passage.

9. Maintain the spirit and general character of the composition as far as possible. If you know the context of the extract, that knowledge should help you to express yourself appropriately. If you do not know the context, imagine a setting for the extract; this will help you to make your meaning clear.

10. Do not use a greater number of words than is necessary to convey your meaning, and use the simplest words you can to express your thought.

Examples

The student should realize that many paraphrases of the same matter, differing widely from one another, may be equally good and equally acceptable. We have, therefore, in the following examples given two versions of one passage, showing different methods of treatment.

1. Paraphrase Macbeth's soliloquy commencing, "If it were done when 'tis done," I. vii. 1-28.

Could the mere execution of what I am about finally close the matter, then the sooner it were done the better. If the assassination held within itself the power to grasp success only and intercept all the other natural results of crime; if this one deadly stroke might be at once the committal and the result of the deed in this life, where we are bound on the shallow of time, we would risk whatever might overtake us in the full flood of eternity. But in these cases we always suffer the consequences in this life; and if we practice bloody deeds they will recoil upon us, for justice, with impartiality, decrees that he who administers the cup of bitterness to another shall himself drink of the dregs.

His having come here to rest raises obstacles in my course; my kinship and allegiance form one strong barrier, the sacred duty of hospitality another. Instead of harming his guest, the host ought jealously to guard his safety. Moreover, this Duncan has been so humble and just a king, that his goodness will appear as angelic witness against the infamy of his murder. The very blasts of heaven will be charged with pity—pure, innocent, helpless pity—and all the powers that speed at heaven's bidding through the air unseen will tell the story of the ghastly act, and a wail of sorrow will rise high above the roaring of the winds. No, think of it as I will, there is nothing to urge me to the crime I contemplate but ambition, and that, like the force with which a too impetuous rider o'er-vaults his saddle, may carry me beyond my mark.

Another Version of the Same Passage

If the perpetration of this deed meant the satisfactory accomplishment of my purpose, then the sooner it were performed the better. If I could murder Duncan and at the same time avoid discovery, so that I might feel assured that, upon this earth—this narrow bank dividing us from two eternities—the one act of assassination might be all-sufficing and conclusive, I would take my chance of the world to come. But such a deed as I now contemplate is often followed by retribution even in this world, and my action may serve but as a lesson to others, teaching them how easily blood may be shed, and the lesson thus taught may be practised upon myself. Justice is impartial and often serves the poisoner with a cup like to that which he prepares for his own foe.

I am doubly bound in honor to safeguard the king. As his cousin I am bound to him by ties of blood, and as his subject by my sworn fealty. Both these reasons cry out against the deed. Again, I am his host, and if all the laws of hospitality demand that I guard him against evil-doers, how much more should I restrain my own hand from his murder!

Besides, King Duncan has exercised his powers with such moderation, and borne the high responsibility of royalty with such freedom from reproach, that these virtues, like angels' tongues, will plead loudly for him, and will stir up indignation against the terrible crime of murder. And Pity, borne upon the swift wings of the wind, like a heavenly seraph or like God's cherubim, will, in a breath, proclaim the horrible deed the whole world over, so that even wrath shall be drowned in the wells of sympathetic tears that will spring to the eyes of all.

What goad have I to drive me on to action? None but ambition, which often over-reaches itself, as an impulsive horseman, leaping over-hastily into his saddle, misses his seat and falls on the other side.

2. Paraphrase the passage commencing "She should have died hereafter." (V. v. 17-28.)

Her death happens at an unfortunate moment. She cannot now enjoy those honors upon which her mind was bent. But so it always happens when we trust ever to the morrow to bring us something which we possess not today. And thus day following day, living always for the future, we creep sluggishly on our way until at last the book of history and of time is closed and eternity begins. And what has time done for those who have departed before us? It has but revealed the folly of their trust and led them on their way to the dust from which they sprang. Begone flickering spark of life, thou art but an unsubstantial, passing shadow, of no more importance in eternity, and no more regarded than is the ranting of an inferior actor who strides and shouts upon some obscure stage and then passes at once from the sight and thoughts of the spectators. Again, life is but the noisy vaporings of a raving madman full of words and gestures, but devoid of meaning.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

INTRODUCTION

Shakespeare's Life

1. Write a brief account of Shakespeare's boyhood days at Stratford.
2. Write a brief account of Shakespeare's married life at Stratford.
3. What was the proximate cause of Shakespeare's leaving Stratford for London?
4. According to tradition, how was Shakespeare first employed in London?
5. Write a short account of Shakespeare's last days.
6. Trace the history of Shakespeare's direct descendants until their final extinction.
7. From your reading, what conclusion have you reached regarding Shakespeare's religion?
8. Tell what you know of Shakespeare's learning.
9. Quote the lines from Dryden's "Essay on Dramatic Poesy" bearing on question eight.
10. Name four Comedies, four Tragedies, and four Chronicle Plays written by Shakespeare.

The Drama

1. Briefly state the scope of the *drama*.
2. Tell what you know of the ancient Greek drama.
3. Sketch the history of the Roman drama.
4. Give a brief account of the connection of Christianity with the ancient drama.
5. Sketch briefly the development of the modern drama in Italy, France, Germany, England, and Scandinavia.
6. How does America stand in the matter of dramatic productions?
7. Compare the staging of the drama in Shakespeare's time with its staging in our day?
8. From the absence of stage accessories, what conclusion do you draw regarding the intelligence of Elizabethan audiences?
9. What does the drama undertake to tell?
10. What is important with regard to every action in drama?

The Tragedy *Macbeth*

1. When was *Macbeth* composed? Give reasons for your answer.
2. Name some of the distinctive features of this play.
3. Contrast the tragedies *Macbeth* and *Hamlet*.
4. Name the sources from which Shakespeare took his material for *Macbeth*.
5. Name some of the changes of incident which Shakespeare made in history.
6. Write a short account of witchcraft as it was understood in Shakespeare's time.
7. How does Dowden speak of tragedy as conceived by Shakespeare?
8. What is the characteristic motive of tragedy?
9. Why is *Macbeth* tragic?
10. Why is the result of Macbeth's actions tragic?

Duncan

1. Briefly describe Duncan's character.
2. What was one of Duncan's chief political blunders?
3. How does the character of Duncan, as portrayed in history, compare with his character as represented by Shakespeare?
4. What does Holinshed say regarding the beginning of Duncan's reign?

Macbeth

1. Under what baneful influence does Macbeth appear to act throughout the play?
2. What qualities of Macbeth's character first impress us?
3. Discuss the *courage* of Macbeth.
4. How is the analysis of Macbeth's character, as represented at the beginning of the play, facilitated?
5. When does Macbeth's character undergo a complete revolution?

Lady Macbeth

1. In considering Lady Macbeth's character, of what should the reader divest himself?
2. What do you regard as the cause of Lady Macbeth's fall from grace?
3. What do you regard as the strongest trait of Lady Macbeth's character?
4. How did Lady Macbeth die?
5. Briefly summarize Mrs. Jameson's estimate of Lady Macbeth's character.

Banquo

1. To whom is Banquo regarded as a foil in this play?
2. What are the prominent traits of Banquo's character?
3. Quote lines illustrating Banquo's modesty of character.
4. Quote lines to show that Banquo was not entirely free from the vices of ambition and superstition.
5. By what vices of his own was Banquo's ruin accomplished?

Macduff, Malcolm, the Witches, and the Macbeth Period of Scottish History

1. Why does Macbeth hate and fear Macduff?
2. What is Malcolm's distinguishing characteristic?
3. Quote the lines in which Malcolm describes his own character.
4. Briefly discuss the Witches.
5. Write a short review of the Macbeth period of Scottish history.

Act I—Scenes I and II

1. Describe the opening scene of the play. What battle is referred to?
2. Give a short account of the state of Scotland so far as this may be gathered from the second scene. Who were Duncan, Malcolm, Macbeth?
3. Explain the following with reference to the context:
   (a) Fair is foul, and foul is fair.
   (b) So well thy words become thee as thy wounds.
   (c) Go pronounce his present death.
4. What do you know about *the Western Isles, Golgotha, Bellona, Saint Colme's Inch?*
5. In what sense does Shakespeare use the following words: *hurlyburly, gallowglasses, minion, memorize, lavish?*

Act I—Scene III

1. Describe the interview between the Witches and Macbeth and Banquo.
2. Explain the following expressions, and show the connection in which they severally occur in the play: "the weird sisters," "you imperfect speakers," "function is smother'd in surmise," "the interim having weigh'd it."
3. Name some of the customary occupations of the witches, using quotations in your answer.

4. Comment upon the grammar or phraseology of the following: "To be king stands not within the prospect of belief, no more than to be Cawdor," "Who was the thane lives yet," "Time and the hour runs through the roughest day," "Let us toward the king."
5. Macbeth says to the Witches: "The thane of Cawdor lives, a prosperous gentleman." Discuss the question as to whether this statement is inconsistent with any preceding passage in the play.

Act I—Scenes IV-VII

1. Give your own view of the character of Duncan, supporting your statements by quotations from the play.
2. By whom, to whom, and under what circumstances were the following lines spoken? Explain where necessary.
   (a) It is a peerless kinsman.
   (b) Stop up the access and passage to remorse.
   (c) The love that follows us sometime is our trouble.
   (d) False face must hide what the false heart doth know.
3. Give the substance of Macbeth's soliloquy, commencing: "If it were done when 'tis done."
4. Explain fully: "We will establish our estate upon our eldest, Malcolm," "the milk of human kindness," "metaphysical aid," "coign of vantage," "He's here in double trust," "sightless couriers of the air," "the receipt of reason a limbec only."
5. Show that Macbeth is subject to the stronger will of his wife.

Act I and General

1. Show, giving quotations, that Macbeth at the period of the first act is generally held in high repute.
2. What circumstances are alluded to in the following lines? Explain them and name the speaker:
   (a) So from that spring whence comfort seem'd to come
   Discomfort swells.
   (b) Though his bark cannot be lost,
   Yet it shall be tempest-tost.
   (c) He finds thee in the stout Norweyan ranks,
   Nothing afeard of what thyself didst make.
   (d) He brings great news.
   (e) What beast was 't then,
   That made you break this enterprise to me.

3. Explain the following: "overcharged with double cracks," "flout the sky, "aroint thee," "the insane root," "supernatural soliciting," "nature's mischief," "this ignorant present," "trammel up," "our great quell."

Act II—Scenes I and II

1. Show by means of incidents or quotations the honesty of Banquo.
2. Paraphrase the following lines, and tell by whom they were spoken:
   (a) Being unprepared,
   Our will became the servant to defect;
   Which else should free have wrought.
   (b) Mine eyes are made the fools o' the other senses
   Or else worth all the rest.
3. Explain the allusions in the following: "Pale Hecate," "Tarquin's ravishing strides," "the fatal bellman, which gives the stern'st good-night," "great Neptune's ocean."
4. Comment upon anything peculiar in the meter or the grammar of the following lines:
   (a) As this which now I draw.
   (b) Words to the heat of deeds too cool breath gives.
   (c) At the south entry; retire we to our chamber.
5. Give the substance of the conversation that ensued between Macbeth and his wife immediately after the murder.

Act II—Scenes III and IV

1. What evidence is contained in the Porter's speech bearing upon the date of composition of this play?
2. How does Macbeth attempt to justify his action in killing the king's servants?
3. Explain with reference to the context:
   (a) Confusion now hath made his masterpiece.
   (b) All is but toys: renown and grace is dead.
   (c) There's daggers in men's smiles.
   (d) Lest our old robes sit easier than our new.
4. Give the meaning of the following words: *napkins, equivocate, argument, ravin, benison.*
5. Give some account of the prodigies that accompanied the murder of Duncan. In what other of Shakespeare's plays are similar portents described?

Act II and General

1. What external and internal evidence is there as to the date of the play? What other plays of Shakespeare belong to the same period of composition?
2. Explain the following expressions, and show very briefly their context in the play: "husbandry in heaven," "sensible to feeling," "take the present horror from the time," "roast your goose," "I'll devil-porter it no further," "the great doom's image," "the traveling lamp," "mousing owl."
3. What do you know of Scone, Colme-kill, the locality of Macbeth's Castle?
4. Give examples from this act of the use of:
   (a) Puns; (b) adverbs used as adjectives; (c) the omission of a verb of motion.
5. How were the following persons affected, either in their fortunes or their feelings, by the murder of Duncan: Malcolm, Macduff, Banquo, Macbeth?

Act III—Scenes I and II

1. Show that the feelings of Macbeth and Banquo towards each other have undergone considerable change since the beginning of the play, and give the reasons for this change.
2. Give the substance of Macbeth's conversation with the murderers.
3. Give the context of the following lines and explain them:
   (a) To be thus is nothing;
   But to be safely thus.
   (b) Shoughs, water-rugs, and demi-wolves, are clept
   All by the name of dogs.
   (c) We have scotch'd the snake, not kill'd it.
   (d) But in them nature's copy's not eterne.
4. Give the meaning of the following words, and illustrate their use by quoting from the play: *rancours, addition, spy, ecstasy, shard-borne.*
5. Explain fully:

   Under him
   My Genius is rebuked, as, it is said,
   Mark Antony's was by Cæsar.

Act III—Scenes III and IV

1. Is there any reason for supposing that the third murderer was Macbeth himself? State your own views on the subject.

2. Briefly describe the banquet scene. How do you account for Macbeth's behavior on that occasion?
3. Explain the following passages and give their context:
   (a) To feed were best at home;
   From thence the sauce to meat is ceremony;
   Meeting were bare without it.
   (b) Augures and understood relations have
   By maggot-pies and choughs and rooks brought forth
   The secret'st man of blood.
4. With what unusual signification are the following words found in these scenes: *offices, encounter, saucy, flaws, admired, owe?*
5. Describe the conversation between Macbeth and Lady Macbeth with which the banquet closes. What light does it throw upon the character of either?

Act III—Scenes V and VI

1. Explain the connection between Hecate and the Witches.
2. Explain the allusions in the following and comment upon the words in italics:
   (a) Hark! I am call'd: my little *spirit*, see,
   Sits in a foggy cloud, and stays for me.
   (b) They *should* find
   What *'twere* to kill a father; so *should* Fleance.
   (c) The most *pious* Edward.
3. Explain the meaning of the following expressions: "artificial sprites," "who cannot want the thought," "from broad words," "receive free honours," "the cloudy messenger turns me his back."
4. *A song within:* "Come away, come away," etc. Quote some of the succeeding lines of this song. In what other play is the song to be found? Is any inference to be drawn from this fact as to the authorship of this part of the play?

Act III and General

1. Show to what extent supernatural influences determine the course of the action of the play.
2. What authorities did Shakespeare consult for the incidents of the play?
3. Explain, with reference to the context:
   (a) Rather than so, come, fate, into the list,
   And champion me to the utterance!

(b) After life's fitful fever he sleeps well.
(c) This is more strange
Than such a murder is.
(d) And you all know, security
Is mortals' chiefest enemy.

4. Give some account of the following words: *bill, seeling, rooky, nonpareil, trenchéd, maws, maggot-pies, confusion, thralls.*
5. Give some account of the properties and powers attributed by Shakespeare to the Witches.

Act IV—Scenes I and II

1. Mention some of the ingredients of the Witches' cauldron. For what reason were horrible or loathsome objects alone chosen?
2. Describe and explain the different apparitions presented to the eyes of Macbeth through the agency of the Witches.
3. Explain fully:
(a) Though the treasure
Of nature's germens tumble all together,
Even till destruction sicken; answer me.
(b) And some, I see,
That two-fold balls and treble sceptres carry:
(c) But cruel are the times, when we are traitors
And do not know ourselves.
4. With what meaning and in what connection do the following words occur? *swelter'd, ravin'd, chaudron, impress, pernicious, firstlings, gin, shag-hair'd.*
5. Discuss Macduff's conduct in leaving his wife and fleeing to England.
6. What is your opinion of Lady Macduff?

Act IV—Scene III

1. How and for what purpose does Malcolm misrepresent himself to Macduff?
2. Show how Shakespeare in this scene conveys a compliment to King James.
3. Explain, briefly denoting the context:
(a) That which you are my thoughts cannot transpose.
(b) Now we'll together; and the chance of goodness
Be like our warranted quarrel.

(c) To relate the manner,
Were, on the quarry of these murder'd deer,
To add the death of you.

(d) Our lack is nothing but our leave. Macbeth
Is ripe for shaking, and the powers above
Put on their instruments.

4. Notice anything that may be remarkable in the following expressions: "uproar the universal peace," "the means that makes us strangers," "Since that the truest issue . . . stands accursed," "relation, too nice, and yet too true," "nothing, but who knows nothing."
5. Describe the effect upon Macduff of the news of his wife's murder. How does this murder affect the progress of the action of the play?

Act IV and General

1. Show that Shakespeare, in his conception of the Witches, has largely followed the popular beliefs of his own times.
2. Describe, with quotations from the play, the appearance of Shakespeare's Witches.
3. Explain the following: "Take a bond of fate," "Thy crown does sear mine eye-balls," "the blood-bolter'd Banquo," "the natural touch," "recoil in an imperial charge," "the title is affeer'd," "portable," " 'Tis call'd the evil," "a modern ecstasy," "he has no children."
4. What allusions are made in this Act to the moon, Birnam Wood, the wren, angels, Edward the Confessor?
5. Show the degradation of Macbeth after his second meeting with the Witches.

Act V—Scenes I, II and III

1. Mention the incidents of Lady Macbeth's career to which she refers in the sleep-walking scene.
2. Quote the lines in which Macbeth gives expression to his weariness of life.
3. Explain with reference to the context:
   (a) My mind she has mated, and amazed my sight.
   (b) Meet we the medicine of the sickly weal.
   (c) Canst thou not minister to a mind diseased?
4. Some say he's mad; others that lesser hate him,
Do call it valiant fury.
Upon what grounds was this opinion formed of Macbeth's conduct? What is your own view on the matter?

5. Explain the following: "This is her very guise," "the bleeding and the grim alarm," "unrough youths," "all mortal consequences," "skirr the country round."

Act V—Scenes IV-VII

1. How does Macbeth receive the news of his wife's death? Give the substance of his reflections upon hearing of it.
2. Describe the incident of the moving wood, and give the words of the prophecy of which it was a fulfilment.
3. Describe the parts played by the Doctor, Seyton, and Young Siward.
4. Explain the meaning of the following expressions and briefly indicate the context in which they occur: "Thoughts speculative their unsure hopes relate," "my fell of hair," "to the last syllable of recorded time," "I pull in resolution," "I'll prove the lie thou speak'st."
5. Describe the action of Malcolm as shown in these scenes, and contrast it with his previous conduct.

Act V—Scene VIII

1. Discuss the question of Macbeth's bravery during the last phases of his life.
2. What is said in this scene upon the subject of Young Siward's death?
3. By whom, to whom, and under what circumstances were the following words spoken? Explain where necessary:
   (a) Why should I play the Roman fool?
   (b) We'll have thee, as our rarer monsters are,
   Painted upon a pole.
   (c) I see thee compass'd with thy kingdom's pearl,
   That speak my salutation in their minds.
4. Explain the following words and expressions: *palter, the show and gaze o' the time, knoll'd, score, the time is free.*
5. Discuss Macbeth's faith in the Witches, and show to what extent it influenced his actions.

Act V and General

1. Show from the play Lady Macbeth's feminine nature and her admiration of her husband.
2. What use of rhyme and of prose is made by Shakespeare? Give examples from this Act.

3. Give the meaning of: *sag, sear, moe, censures, equivocation, harbingers, still, kerns.*
4. What allusions are contained in this act to Arabia, English epicures, physic, the stage, bear-baiting, earls?

General Questions

1. Write an essay upon courage and distinguish between the kind of courage exhibited by Macbeth and that which Lady Macbeth possessed.
2. Draw a contrast between the plays, *Macbeth* and *Hamlet,* and between the heroes of the two plays.
3. What do you understand by (1) Irony, (2) Euphemism? Give examples from this play.
4. Quote from the play allusions to (1) night, (2) dreams.
5. Give the exact location of Inverness, Scone, Birnam Wood, and Forres.
6. What do you know of the true history of the period at which Macbeth lived?
7. Mention some of the more important points in which Shakespeare has departed from his historical authority, and give reasons for his deviations.
8. Write a concise Argument to this drama. Comment on its diction, attitude (characteristics common to the personages generally), and motive (or pervading sentiment).
9. Sketch the life of Shakespeare, and point out his chief excellencies as a dramatist.
10. Discuss the prosody of the following lines:
    (a) Smells wooingly here; no jutty frieze.
    (b) Of his own chamber, and used their very daggers.
    (c) Which in his death were perfect. I am one, my liege.
    (d) I'll come to you anon. We are resolved, my lord.
    (e) In our last conference; pass'd in probation with you.
11. Comment upon the grammatical peculiarities in the following:
    (a) Always thought that I require a clearness.
    (b) This sore night hath trifled former knowings.
    (c) Weary with disasters, tugg'd with fortune.
    (d) Who may I rather challenge for unkindness.
    (e) 'Tis two or three, my lord, that bring you word.
12. Quote any lines you may remember for which emendations have been proposed, and discuss the alternative readings.

13. From what sources did Shakespeare derive this play?
14. Mention the chief instances of the supernatural in Macbeth; and show how this element determines the action of the play.
15. Explain, with reference to the context:
    (1) Confronted him with self-comparisons.
    (2) Within the note of expectation.
    (3) Better thee without than he within.
    (4) Let our just censures attend the true event.
    (5) Function is smothered in surmise.
16. Give the meaning of: *weird, harbinger, limbec, shard-borne, farrow, foison, chaudron, germens, hermit, vouch'd, doff, pester'd.*
17. Illustrate from the play Macbeth's openness, ambition, strong imagination.
18. Quote reference to swimming, sickness, navigation, the stage, horses; and write out any four phrases which have become familiar quotations.
19. What internal evidence is there as to the date of the composition of this play?
20. How far does the play *Macbeth* correspond with or misrepresent historical facts?
21. Contrast the characters of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth with some characters in other tragedies.
22. Explain, with reference to the context:
    (1) the golden round
    Which fate and metaphysical aid doth seem
    To have thee crown'd withal.
    (2) There's husbandry in heaven;
    Their candles are all out.
    (3) But this sore night
    Hath trifled former knowings.
    (4) All these are portable
    With other graces weighed.
    (5) Their malady convinces
    The great assay of art.
    (6) Ay, in the catalogue
    Ye go for men.
23. Give some account of the words: *paddock, inch, limbec, weird, foisons, sag, clept.*

WORKS OF REFERENCE

For the convenience of teachers and others the following list of aids to the study of Shakespeare is presented:

Dowden's *Shakespeare, His Mind and Art.*

Gervinus' *Shakespeare Commentaries.*

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Mayor's *Chapters on English Metre.*

GLOSSARY

Adder, viper, IV. i. 16.
Addition, title, I. iii. 106.
Address'd, prepared, II. ii. 24.
Afeard, made afraid, I. iii. 96.
Affection, disposition, nature, IV. iii. 70.
Affeer'd, assessed, confined, established, IV. iii. 34.
All-thing, (adv.) altogether, III. i. 13.
A-making, a compacted prepositional phrase of which the parts are "on"= in, and "making," an abstract noun, III. iv. 34.
Amazed, confused, II. iii. 94, IV. i. 126; V. i. 86.
An, if, III vi. 19.
Annoyance, injury, V. i. 84.
Anon, (1) at once, I. i. 9; (2) in a moment, II. iii. 24.
Antic, quaint. The same word as antique, IV. i. 130.
Antidote, a medicine given as a remedy, especially to counteract the effects of poison, V. iii. 42.
Approve, prove, I. vi. 4.
Argument, topic, discussion, II. iii. 106.
Aroint thee, begone, I. iii. 6.
Assay, attempt, effort, IV. iii. 135.
Augure, augury, the science of divination, III. iv. 125.
Avaunt, begone, III. iv. 94.
Aweary, the prefix here seems not to be from "of," as explained by Abbott, but is due to the analogy of words like "alive," where it is the preposition "on." Cf. "a-making" above, V. v. 49.

Baited, provoked, harassed, V. viii. 29.
Bane, destruction, V. iii. 58.
Bank, in the ordinary sense of ground on the edge of water, and not beach, I. vii. 6.
Battle, army corps, V. vi. 4.
Beldam, hag, III. v. 2.
Benison, blessing, II. iv. 40.
Birthdom, explained by Dr. Johnson as "birthright," but better as "land of our birth," IV. iii. 4.
Blanch, to turn pale, whiten, III. iv. 117.
Blaspheme, to slander, IV. iii. 101.
Blood-bolter'd, having the hair matted with blood, IV. i. 123.
Blow, blow upon, I. iii. 15.
Bodement, prediction, IV. i. 96.
Boot, in addition, profit, advantage, IV. iii. 37.
Borne in hand, deceived with false promises, III. i. 80.
Botch, a bungling, III. i. 133.
Breech'd, covered, II. iii. 102.
Brinded, or brindled, streaked, IV. i. 1.
Broad, unrestrained, III. vi. 21; III. iv. 23.
Bruited, rumored, proclaimed, V. vii, 22.

Cabin'd, imprisoned, III. iv. 24.
Casing, encasing, enclosing, III. iv. 23.
Censures, opinions, V, iv. 14.
Chalice, a cup, I. vii. 11.
Chamberlain, the officer charged with the direction and management of the private apartments of the king, I. vii. 58.
Champion, to challenge, III. i. 71.
Chance, event, II. iii. 77; IV. iii. 128.
Chaps, jaws, I. ii. 21.
Chaudron, intestines, IV. i. 32.
Choppy, chapped, I. iii. 44.
Choughs, jackdaws, III. iv. 126.
Chuck, said to be a variant of chick, III. ii. 45.
Clept, called, III. i. 93.
Cling, shrivel, V. v. 40.
Cloister'd, having to do with a cloister; an example of the Elizabethan freedom in coining adjectives, III. ii. 41.
Close, secret, III. v. 7.
Cloudy, gloomy, sullen, III. vi. 41.
Coign, a corner, I, vi. 7.
Composition, an arrangement of peace terms, I. ii. 58.
Compt, account, I. vi. 26.
Compunctious, causing compunction, I. v. 47.
Confineless, boundless, IV. iii. 55.
Confounds, ruins, II. ii. 11.
Confusion, destruction, II. iii. 52.
Consent, advice, counsel, II. i. 25.
Convince, overcome, overpower, I. vii. 59; IV. iii. 134.

Corporal, corporeal, substantial, I. vii. 74.
Cracks, here in the sense of "charge," rather than of the noise made by the charge, I. ii. 36.
Curtained, having a curtain, II. i. 51.
Dearest, having a close relation to, I. v. 12.
Degrees, ranks, III. iv. 1.
Doom, judgment, the day of judgment, II. iii. 84.
Doubt, to fear, IV. ii. 67; V. v. 43.
Dudgeon, the hilt, II. i. 46.
Dunnest, darkest, superlative of dun-brown, I. v. 53.
Ecstasy, madness, mental suffering, III. ii. 22.
Equivocate, to speak with double meaning, prevaricate, II. iii. 13.
Eterne, eternal, III. ii. 38.
Expedition, haste, II. iii. 96.
Fact, literally, something done; here, an evil deed or crime, III. vi. 10.
Faculties, powers, I. vii. 17.
Fantastical, imaginary, I. iii. 53.
Farrow, a litter of pigs, IV. i. 64.
Fee-grief, a private, or personal sorrow, IV. iii. 188.
Fell, fierce, cruel, IV. ii. 71; a head, V. v. 11.
Fenny, living in a fen, IV. i. 12.
File, list, III. i. 94; V. ii. 8.
Filed, defiled, III. i. 64.
Fits, convulsions, IV. ii. 17.
Flaw, a gust of wind; hence an outburst of emotion or passion, III. iv. 63.
Flighty, in a swift flight, IV. i. 145.
Flourish, a set of notes on a trumpet performed on the approach of any person of distinction, I. iv. (Stage dir.)
Flout, mock defiantly, I. ii. 48.
Foisons, abundance, IV. iii. 81.
Follows, attends, follows upon, I. vi. 11.
Forbid, accursed, under an interdict, I. iii. 21.
Forced, reinforced, V. v. 5.
Founded, having a foundation, III. iv. 22.
Franchised, free (here from disloyal obligations), II. i. 28.
From, in consequence of, III. vi. 21, IV. ii. 20.
Fry, literally, spawn of fishes, used in the sense of offspring, IV. ii. 84.
Function, "active exercise of the faculties" (Clar. Press), I. iii. 141.
Gallowglass, a heavy-armed foot-soldier. (Irish, gallo-glach), I. ii. 13.
Germens, seeds, IV. i. 58.
Gild, used figuratively of smearing with blood, II. ii. 55.
Gin, trap or snare, IV. ii. 35.
Gouts, drops, II. i. 46.
Graced, gracious, *-ed* here is the adj. suffix meaning "characterized by," III, iv. 41.
Groom, a servant, II. ii. 5; II. ii. 49.
Gulf, gullet, IV. i. 23.

Hangman, executioner, II. ii. 27.
Harbinger, forerunner, messenger, I. iv. 45; V. vi. 10.
Hautboys, (stage dir.) wooden wind instruments, I. vi.
Hawk'd at, struck, as a hawk strikes its prey, II. iv. 13.
Hold, accept, IV. ii. 19.
Holp, helped, I. vi. 23.
Horror, used here for the fearful silence, II. i. 59.
Howlet, young owl, IV. i. 17.
Hurlyburly, a tumult, I. i. 3.
Husbandry, thrift, II. i. 5.
Hyrcan, belonging to Hyrcania, a country south of the Caspian Sea, III. iv. 102.

'Ild, for "yield" in the older sense of reward, I. vi. 13.
Illness, evil disposition, I. v. 22.
Impress, press, i.e. force into service, IV. i. 95.
Inch, an island, I. ii. 60.
Incarnadine, to make scarlet, II. ii. 61.
Informs thus, brings forth this form, II. i. 48.
Inhabit, to keep at home, to remain within doors, III. iv. 106.
Interest, here in sense of affection, I. iv. 63.
Intrenchant, not to be cut, invulnerable, V. viii. 9.

Jocund, jovial, III. ii. 40.
Jump, risk, I. vii. 7.
Jutty, projection, I. vi. 6.

Kern, an Irish light-armed foot-soldier, I. ii. 13; I. ii. 29; V. vii. 17.
Knoll'd, tolled, V. viii. 50.
Knowings, experiences, II. iv. 4.

Laced, streaked, II. iv. 98.
Lack, need, requirement, IV. iii. 229.

Lapp'd, wrapped, I. ii. 53.
Latch, to catch, IV. iii. 187.
Lated, late, the suffix *ed* having the meaning "characterized by being," III. iii. 6.
Lavish, profuse, prodigal, exultant, I. ii. 56.
Levy, an armed force, III. ii. 25.
Limbec, popular form of alembic, a still, I. vii. 62.
Limited, appointed, bound by duty, II. iii. 37.
Line, reinforce, as a garment is strengthened by lining, I. iii. 112.
Lodged, laid low, IV. i. 54.
Loon, a base fellow, V. iii. 11.
Luxurious, lustful, IV. iii. 58.

Maggot-pie, a magpie, III. iv. 126.
Martlet, a martin, I. vi. 4.
Mated, overcome, confounded, same as in checkmate, V. i. 86.
Maw, a stomach, III. iv. 73; IV. i. 23.
Mere, entire, complete, IV. iii. 82; IV. iii. 144.
Metaphysical, supernatural, I. v. 31.
Methought, it seemed to me; an entirely distinct word from the preterit of "think" with which it has in time become confused, II. ii. 34; V. v. 34.
Minion, darling, favorite, I. ii. 18; II. iv. 15.
Minutely, occurring every minute, V. ii. 18.
Missive, anything sent; a messenger, I. v. 7.
Modern, common, ordinary, IV. iii. 162.
Moe, more (in number), V. iii. 34.
Mortality, mortal life, II. iii. 79.
Mortified, dead figuratively; dead to all natural feelings, V. ii. 5.
Mummy, dried carcass, IV. i. 23.
Muse, wonder, III. iv. 86.

Napkin, a handkerchief, II. iii. 7.
Naught, evil, IV. iii. 217.
Nave, the central part of a wheel; here, and here only, used as a diminutive of navel, I. ii. 21.
Navigation, shipping, IV. i. 53.
Near, (Comp. of nigh.) a comparative form, used in later English as a positive with new comparative "nearer," II. iii. 125.
Newt, a lizard, IV. i. 14.
Nice, minutely particular, IV. iii. 166.
Niggard, miser, IV. iii. 172.
Nightgown, dressing-gown. Nightgowns in the modern sense were unknown until a comparatively recent date, II. ii. 69; V. i. 5; V. i. 69.
Nonpareil, matchless, III. iv. 19.
Notion, mind, III. i. 82.

Oblivious, causing oblivion. Cf. "insane" in I. iii. 84; V. iii. 42.
O'er-fraught, overcharged, IV. iii. 202.
Offices, servants, II. i. 14.
On, of, I. iii. 84; V. i. 70.
Or, before; it has no connection with the alternative "or," IV. iii. 165.
Owe, possess, own, I. iii. 76; I. iv. 10; III. iv. 114.

Pall, (verb) wrap as in a pall, I. v. 53.
Palpable, capable of being felt, II. i. 40.
Palter, equivocate, dodge, V. viii. 20.
Patch, a term of contempt, whether from the patched or parti-colored dress of jesters, or from the Italian "pazzo," a fool, is uncertain, V. iii. 14.
Peak, to grow lean, fall away, I. iii. 23.
Pearl, "this mean's 'thy kingdom's wealth,' or rather 'ornaments'" (Malone in Var.), V. viii. 56.
Pent-house, literally, a shed projecting from a main building; in Shakespeare, an eyelid, I. iii. 20.
Pernicious, hurtful, deadly, IV. i. 133.
Pester, (formerly to encumber, clog; short for "impester") harassed, V. ii. 23.
Place, "a technical term in falconry for the pitch attained by a falcon before swooping down on its prey," II. iv. 12.
Point, at a, prepared for, IV. iii. 127.
Poorly, unworthily, II. ii. 71.
Portable, tolerable, endurable, IV. iii. 82.
Posset, a drink of hot, curdled milk, usually taken at night, II. ii. 6.
Posters, swift travelers, I. iii. 33.
Power, army, IV. iii. 177; IV. iii. 228; V. ii. 1; V. vi. 7.
Present, immediate, its usual Elizabethan sense, I. ii. 63. Cf. "presently," IV. iii. 137.
Pretence, design, intent, II. iii. 117.
Pretend, intend, a'm at, II. iv. 24.
Probation, proof, III. i. 79.
Proof, armor that has been proved impenetrable, I. ii. 53.
Protest, publicly proclaim, declare, III. iv. 106; V. ii. 11.

Purveyor, one who goes before to make provision for the table; a herald, I. vi. 22.
Push, attack, V. iii. 19.
Put on, set to work, IV. iii. 231.

Quarry, a heap of slaughtered game, IV. iii. 198.
Quell, used euphemistically for murder, I. vii. 67.

Rancours, hatreds, III. i. 66.
Ravell'd, tangled, II. ii. 36.
Ravin, to devour, plunder, II. iv. 28; IV. i. 24.
Rawness, without due preparation, IV. iii. 26.
Receipt, receptacle, I. vii. 61.
Received, received as true, I. vii. 67.
Recoil, to give way, yield, IV. iii. 19.
Repetition, recital, II. iii. 71.
Require, request, III. iv. 6.
Ronyon, a mangy, or scabby animal, I. iii. 6.
Rooky, gloomy, haunted by rooks, III. ii. 51.
Rubs, imperfections, III. i. 133.
Rump-fed, variously explained:—(1) Fed on good meat. (2) Fed on poor meat. (3) Fed on nuts. (1) seems the most probable, I. iii. 6.

Sag, to droop, V. iii. 10.
Saucy, violent, III. iv. 25.
Scarf up, to blindfold, III. ii. 47.
Score, account or reckoning, V. viii. 52.
Scotch'd, slightly wounded, III. ii. 13.
Sear, burn, scorch, IV. i. 113; dry or wither, V. iii. 22.
Seeling, making blind, a technical term in falconry. To "seel" was to close the eyes of a young hawk by drawing a thread through the lids, III. ii. 46.
Self-abuse, self deception, III. iv. 143.
Sennet, "a technical term for a particular set of notes played by trumpets or cornets and different from a flourish" (Clar. Press), III. i. 10, Stg. dir.
Se'nnights, a week, seven nights, I. iii. 22.
Sensible, apparent to the senses, II. i. 36.
Sewer, "the officer who formerly set and removed dishes, tasted them, etc." (Skeat.) "In Elizabethan times when servants entered with the dishes for a banquet, he (the Sewer) preceded them," I. vii., Stg. dir.
Shag, rough, IV. ii. 83.
Shard-borne, borne on shards, i. e. the scaly wing case of the beetle, III. ii. 42.
Shoughs, rough-coated dogs, III. i. 93.
Sightless, invisible, I. v. 51; I. vii. 23.
Single, weak, I. iii. 141.
Sirrah, a form of address used toward comparatively inferior persons, III. i. 44.
Skirr, scour, V. iii. 34.
Slab, slimy, viscous, IV. i. 31.
Sleave, raw silk floss, II. ii. 36.
Sliver, to cut or tear away, IV. i. 28.
Sole, mere, alone, IV. iii. 12.
Solemn, stately, ceremonious, III. i. 14.
Sooth, (1) n. truth; (2) adj. true, I. ii. 35; V. v. 40.
Sore, dreadful, II. iv. 3.
Speculation, power of sight, III. iv. 96.
Spongy, imbibing like a sponge, I. vii. 66.
Sprites, the word is our "spirits," IV. i. 127.
State, (1) a canopy; (2) a chair with the canopy over it. Used in second sense here, III. iv. 5.
Still, (1) constantly, V. i. 85; (2) invariably, I. vii. 8; III. i. 21.
Strangely visited, i. e. afflicted with strange diseases, IV. iii. 142.
Success, outcome, I. iii. 90; I. vii. 4.
Sudden, violent, IV. iii. 59.
Suggestion, temptation, I. iii. 135.
Summer-seeming, befitting summer, like an annual that dies when summer departs, IV. iii. 79.
Surcease, a stopping, cessation (as of life), I. vii. 4.
Surveying, perceiving, I. ii. 30.

Taint, become infected, V. iii. 3.
Take, "to change into gall by your malignant power." (Schmidt.) I. v. 50.
Teems, teems with, IV. iii. 168.
Thane, a title; in Saxon times a nobleman inferior in rank to an earl and ealdorman; later it was equivalent to earl, I. ii. 44.
Titles, things to which he has a title in law, his possessions, IV. ii. 7.
To, in addition to, III. i. 51.
Towering, a technical term in falconry, used of the rise of a bird to its

"place." (Vide supra, Place) II. iv. 12.

Toys, trifles, II. iii. 80.

Trains, deceitful devices, IV. iii. 111.

Trammel, entangle, as in a net, I. vii. 3.

Transpose, change, alter, IV. iii. 21.

Treatise, story, V. v. 12.

Trenchéd, cut, III. iv. 27.

Trifled, made trifles of, II. iv. 4.

Tyrant, usurper, III. vi. 22; IV. iii. 12.

Undeeded, unused, having done no deed, V. vii. 20.

Unseam'd, ripped open, I. ii. 21.

Untitled, without a title, IV. iii. 97.

Use, custom, I. iii. 138.

Utterance, utmost, III. i. 71.

Valued, provided with values or estimates of worth, III. i. 94.

Vantage, favorable opportunity or position, I. ii. 30; I. iii. 113; I. vi. 7.

Visard, a mask, III. ii. 34.

Wanton, unguided, unrestrained, I. iv. 34.

Warranted, justified, IV. iii. 129.

Wassail, carousal, revelry, I. vii. 59.

Watching, waking, V. i. 12.

Water-rugs, water dogs with rough coats, III. i. 93.

Weal, state, commonwealth, III. iv. 77; V. ii. 27.

Weird, having to do with fate; as an adjective, unearthly, uncanny, fateful, I. iii. 32.

Wholesome, healthy, IV. iii. 98.

Wink at, refuse to see, I. iv. 52.

With, by, III. i. 111.

Withal, with it, I. iii. 57.

Worm, a young serpent, III. iv. 29.

Wrack, wreck, V. v. 51.

Wrought, p. part. of work. Here it means agitated, I. iii. 150.

Yesty, frothy, IV. i. 52.

RPH